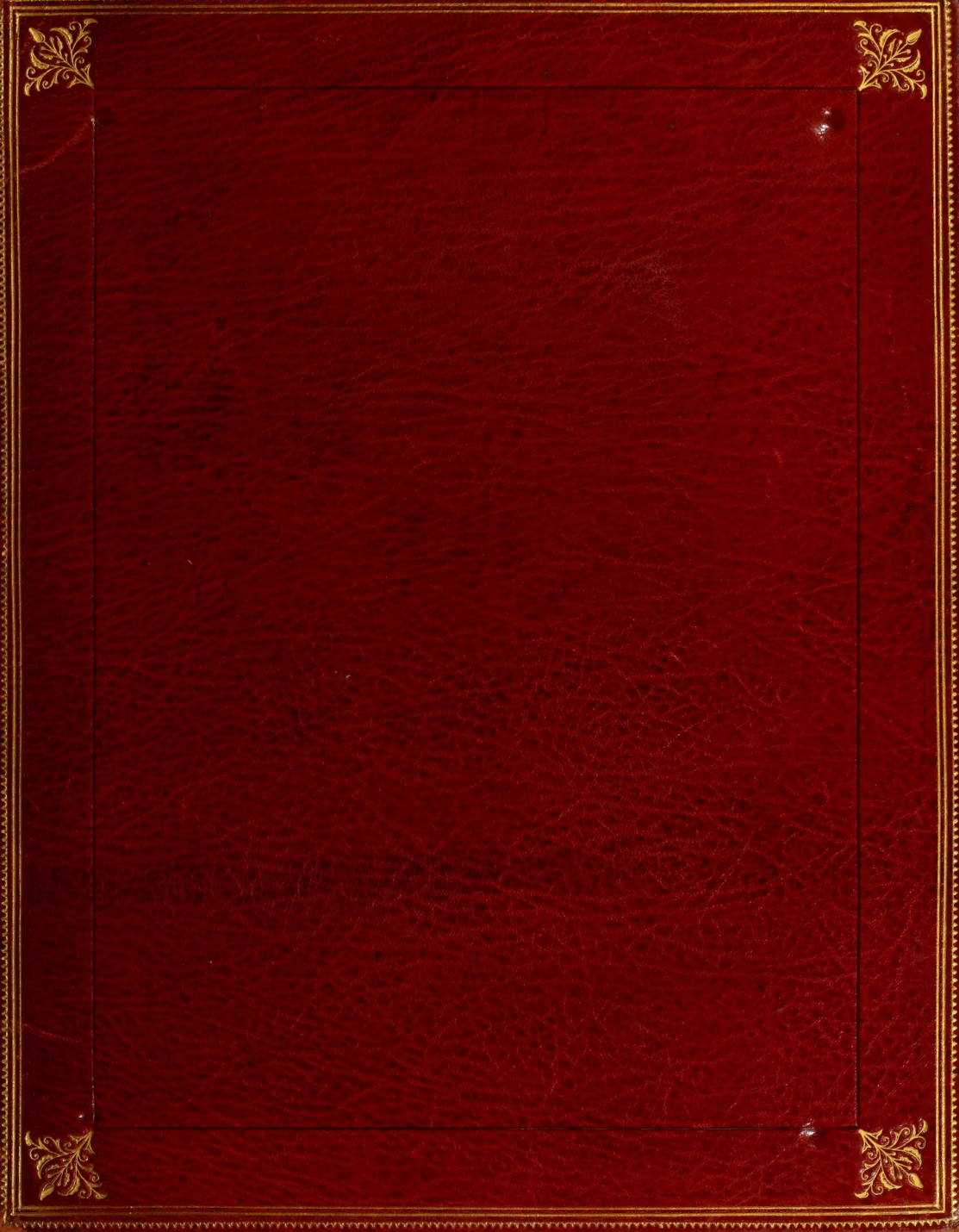










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JOSHUA PIZA
and
His Descendants

by
NINA LINDO BUTERMAN



MACMILLAN
1918

NEW YORK

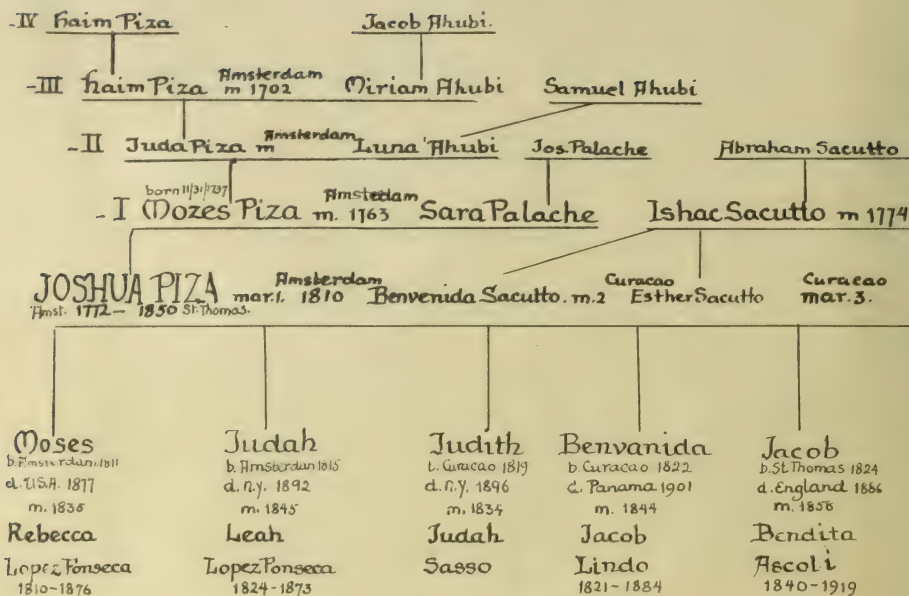
The Chronicle
of
JOSHUA PIZA
and
His Descendants

A highly decorative border surrounds the text. It features a variety of flowers, including red tulips, pink pansies, and yellow daisies, interspersed with green and pink scrolling vines. At the top left is a circular crest containing a drawing of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. At the top right is a shield-shaped crest divided into four quadrants, each with a different scene. At the bottom center is a large, light blue circular medallion with a red border, containing a small, illegible label.

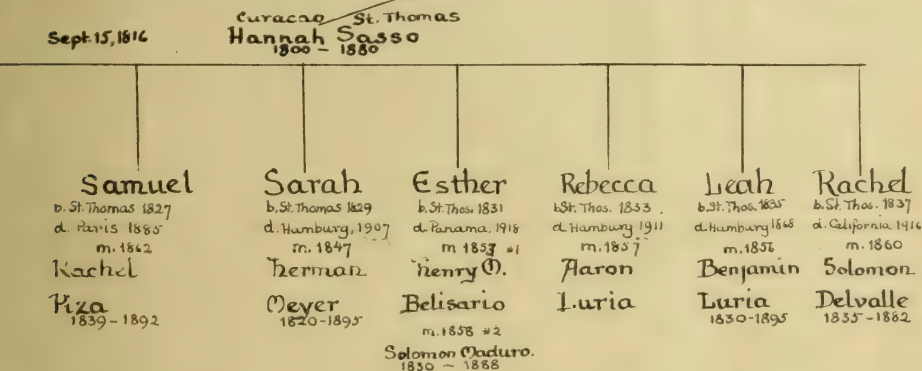
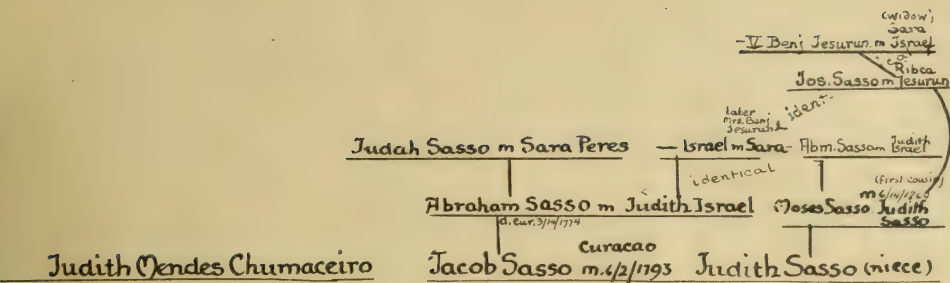


JOSHUA PIZA

1772-1850



FOREBEARS OF JOSHUA



PIZA AND HIS WIVES.





THE DUTCH ISLAND of

Curaçao had a considerable Jewish settlement, but no minister. Holland was a paternal government, and when the Hebrew colonists requested that a minister of their faith be sent to guide the congregation, Holland appointed Joshua Piza. He arrived accompanied by his wife Benvenida Zacuto, her sister Esther, and his two sons, Moses and Judah.



Benvenida did not live to know much of Curaçao. According to the story, her death was due to shock. On their arrival they were given a right royal reception. Gifts were showered on them by all the members of the new minister's flock. Baskets of fruit, native viands, flowers—all arrived borne on the heads of powerful black servants. Never before had the bewildered Dutchwoman imagined anything like it—never had she seen a Negro, or heard of one; and these tall ebony creatures, with their gleaming white teeth, arms akimbo and heads erect under staggering weights, were more than Benvenida, worn out with weeks of discomfort on a sailing-vessel, could stand. She gave one cry: "Ach der Duyvil!" and fainted. She never recovered from the demonic apparition, and her death resulted shortly after.



Joshua assumed his duties, and all went well until the congregation took exception to his living in the house with his unmarried sister-in-law, Esther Zacuto, who had quite naturally taken charge of his household and

children. Such a position was equivocal, and unbecoming their minister, they said. So he dutifully married this sister-in-law. Esther's married life was brief. In little more than a year she died giving birth to twins, which did not survive her.



Joshua Piza busied himself with his bretheren. But they too, busied themselves with Joshua Piza. It would not do, they said, for him to live alone. Their minister must be a married

man.

"But whom shall I marry?" asked the harrassed man.

Hannah Sasso, aged sixteen, the daughter of the Assistant-Reader of the of the synagogue was indicated. "What!" said Joshua who was at least twenty years older, "that young girl! She'll fill me up with children!" But ever obliging, he did as suggested. His intuition proved correct, for of their union which took place in 1816, nine children were born.



Perhaps this intuition was based on an understanding of hereditary tendencies. For Hannah had an uncle who was the father of twenty-four sons. He lived in Curaçao with the fertile wife that had so blessed him, but the fame of this unusual family extended even to the mother country. The Governor of Curaçao was instructed by the Crown to verify the report. The prolific pair had a great feast prepared, and the twenty-seven people who sat down to enjoy it were the parents, the twenty-four sons and the astonished Governor. But alas! immediately after the official counting

the line began to die out. It could hardly be expected that April & November could live together in perfect harmony, until they had at least had time to adapt themselves to each other.

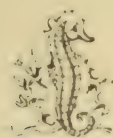


Joshua the Dutchman, scholar, astronomer, linguist - versed in Hebrew and Spanish, as well as Dutch - could not abide the jargon that was spoken by the natives of the island. "*Papiemento*" it was called, and was a singsong mixture of mispronunciations, from these same languages. He would not allow it to be spoken in his home, and demanded that his wife learn to speak good Spanish. There may have been other differences too, for two weeks after their marriage; young Hannah became so exasperated with him that she vowed she would not be his wife any longer, and to prove it, threw her bright new wedding ring out of the window into the garden. When she got over her fit of temper, there was much searching for the ring, first secretly, and then with the aid of servants, but it was never found; so Joshua bought her a new one. ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○



For about ten years he remained in Curaçao. He must have arrived at the Dutch island about 1815 and departed thence in 1825. The cause of his exodus was a lamentable schism among his flock over the exact pronunciation of certain Hebrew words. The Mikve Israel congregation, living up to the reputation for factiousness that it had earned in the one-hundred-and-sixty-seven years of its existence finally ^{split} into two parties: those who said "*Agay-fin*" and those who held for "*A-gah-fin*". The minister res-

olutely—or stubbornly—refused to change his pronunciation, and the quarrel over the word became so bitter that, gathering his family together, he set sail for the island of St. Thomas



De William Charles Henry Friso, by the grace
of God, Prince of Orange Nassau etc.

After having come to our ears the discrepan-
cies and variances which have arisen some time
between the Parnassim, the board of the syna-
gogue, and the Hacham or preacher of the Jew-
ish Nation in the island of Curacao on the one
side, and some members of the aforesaid community
on the other, and from which nothing but very
prejudicial consequences may result for the wel-
fare of the island:

Have we thus found right to ordain and decree:

That all the dissenting members of the Jewish
Portugese Nation, immediately after the publication
of this shall again join the congregation, to be
governed as of old by the Parnassim and Board of
Synagogue, according to the Jewish Portugese con-
stitution.

That further Parnassim and Board of Synagogue of
the Jewish Nation at Curacao have to adhere punctual-
ly and strictly to the regulations and ordinances which
shall be forwarded by us to them through the Parnas-
sim of the Jewish Portugese Community in Amsterdam.

And to reconciliation more solemn and perma-
nent, do we ordain besides the dispositions taken on
that account by us, that a solemn and general thanks-
giving and prayer day to be held at a time (the soon-
er the better) to be fixed by the Governor and Council
of Curacao.

Thus done and resolved at our Court in the Hague,
30 April 1750

(signed) Prince of Orange Nassau.

The Edict on the previous page was issued by the Prince of Orange Nassau to his subjects of Jewish faith in Curaçoa, seventy-five years before Joshua Piza's quarrel. It is included only to show how these schismatic quarrels had always existed, and how difficult it was to repress them.

This proclamation was called forth by a quarrel that became so bitter that one half of the Congregation refused to speak to the other half. However, it was not until a stone wall had been erected in the burial-ground, so that members of the two factions should not lie near each other even in death, that the good Prince interfered.



IN ST THOMAS



In St Thomas, Joshua

served as minister for many years, but pettiness and faction seemed as much a part of the congregational life in this thriving Danish colony as it had been in the island they had left because of these vexations. At last there was so much dissension that Hannah, though twenty-eight years her husband's junior, was impelled to adopt a motherly attitude toward the worried man, insisting that he resign his position and spend the rest of his life at peace.

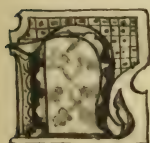
"Resign! With all these daughters on my hands!" exclaimed the minister.

However, Hannah was determined, and immediately put into execution a plan she had: to open a store, and alone to support the family.



St Thomas was in the heyday of its glory then, the chief coaling port for the whole Spanish Main. In its wonderful harbors, trading-vessels from all over the world paused, unloading there freight of one sort, and taking on cargoes of another. The main streets of the town of Charlotte-Amalie were always thronged. It was in a very busy city that the children, Judith & Benvenida grew up, and Jacob (1824), Samuel (1827), Sarah (1829), Esther (1831), Rebecca (1833), Leah (1835), and Rachel (1837) were born and raised. Hannah's

business thrive - she seemed to have a genius for it. Her husband was not allowed inside the store: she declared she could not sell so much as a spool of thread when he was present. Though he was genial and amusing, he was most unbusinesslike. A negro once came into the shop to buy some mourning apparel when the old man was trespassing. "What," said the former pastor facetiously, "you don't need mourning - you're all black already!" ●●●●●

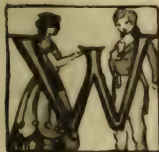


ot only did the energetic woman bring up the children decently, but she also managed to lay aside two thousand dollars to start her sons, Jacob and Samuel, in business. One day she called the boys, now grown to manhood, into the store. ❧❧

"Now Coco and Sampi," she said, "I have worked hard, as you well know, and I have succeeded in saving all this money for you boys to give you a start in life. Now you go off to some new place and don't come back until you have made a fortune." ❧❧❧❧

The lads invested their money in European goods, and set sail for Panama to market them. This was at the time of the Gold-Rush to California, and Panama was extremely important - right on the highway of the adventurers - as well as being the link for trade between Europe and the busy western coast of South America. But the journey was not without danger, and its worst stage was

the crossing of the isthmus by a route that was part jungle, part swamp, and part lake. About a quarter of the way to the Pacific, they came to the roaring Chagres River, which was even more unruly than usual. The barge, on which the two young men were making the passage of the stream, was upset, and all their goods were lost or ruined. The brothers reached Panama almost penniless. Their charm and amiability, however, won them friends, and they obtained from the local business houses credit that enabled them to enter in a commercial enterprise that soon prospered. Yet in their better fortune - for they both did become rich men - a deadly quarrel parted the brothers. They discontinued both business and social relations, and never spoke to each other to the end of their days. ❧



When the second daughter, "Benvenida", was married to "Handsome Jack" Lindo, poor but charming, Hannah had saved another thousand dollars to give the young couple. She had strongly disapproved of the match on account of the young man's financial status, had done her best to persuade "Bem" to accept a well-to-do suitor from Hamburg who was her husband's cousin, but the young people were so in love, and persisted in their attachment for so many years, that in 1844 she consented

to the match and generously endowed them. A thousand dollars was a very unusual dowry for that time: when her step-son **Moses**, was married in 1835, his bride, **Rebecca Lopez-Fonseca**, had brought with her only two hundred dollars, and Judah's bride, the gentle **Loche Lopez-Fonseca** whom he married the year after **Benvenida's** wedding, had a similar *dot*.

Joshua **Piza** died in 1850, at the age of seventy-two. His wife outlived him by twenty-nine years.



כְּתוּבָה On Wednesday Evening the 12th of Tishree 5605 corresponding to 25th Sept 1844. Jacob son of Moses & Esther Jeserun Lindo, resolved to take as his lawful & legitimate Wife, Benvenida, Daughter of Joshua & Hannah Piza binding himself as by this Contract he binds & obliges himself, to maintain, assist & honor his said Bride as is the Custom and usage in Israel.

The Dowry that the said Bride brings being One Thousand Dollars, to which the Bridegroom adds as is customary, the Arras, or Fifty per Cent, making together One Thousand five Hundred Dollars, for which sum the said Bride holds a prior claim in preference to all Debts or Engagements.

The Bride & Bridegroom being both satisfied with the foregoing, & the latter having sworn to fulfil the same, has signed this in presence of Reader & Witnesses. At Thomas, Datum ut supra.

Witnesses

J. C. Petit

J. H. Osorio

J. M. Monsanto
Treas.

J. Lindo

M. Piza.

acty Reader

וְאֵלֶּה These are the agreements made and entered into between the Bride & Bridegroom above named in their full force & effect as is the custom in Israel, Viz if the Bride should die during the lifetime of the Bridegroom without issue living, he obliges himself to return to her Heirs one half of the Dowry, say five Hundred Dollars, and if on the contrary the Bridegroom should die during the lifetime of the Bride without issue living, she then remains heiress for the full amount of this Contract.

Both parties having assented to the foregoing, the Bridegroom has hereunto set his hand in the presence of Reader & Witnesses.

Witnesses

J. C. Petit

J. H. Osorio

J. M. Monsanto

J. Lindo

M. Piza.

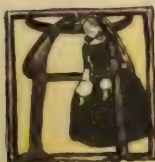
acty Reader

The WIDOW



1800-1850

BARBARA



As a widow, Hanna's

status remained unchanged. For years old **J**eosuah had been of no financial assistance. It was almost entirely by her own efforts that this remarkably energetic woman kept the children well dressed, attractive and healthy.

"On what do you feed them?" inquired the neighbors admiring their clear, fine complexions and tall upright forms.

"Salt codfish and beans!" answered the widow triumphantly. She did not believe in luxury: she believed in saving. At the end of the year, she used sadly to calculate how much money she would have made, if she had not spent so much on rent and food; - as if those necessities were *extras*.

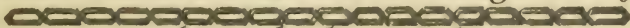
The stepsons, **M**oses and **J**udah were married in 1835 and 1845, respectively, and after that time their own growing families made it impossible for them to be of any great financial aid.

Hannah was an inveterate match-maker and one by one all the handsome daughters found husbands among the prominent traders, mostly men from abroad whose business naturally brought them to St. Thomas. It was commonly said that all the best *partis* went to the **P**za girls



chy **P**za was the youngest, and her mother's favorite child. In the year 1860, when the sons and all the other daughters were married, **A**chy became

engaged at the age of twenty-two to Solomon Delvalle, twenty-five a very promising young business man of St. Thomas. **H**annah fretted that she could not give this pearl of daughters such a wedding-present as she felt she deserved.

On Saturday morning, while the old lady was taking a bath, a servant knocked at the door to tell her that a diver was there who had brought up from the bottom of the sea something that he was eager to show to his old customer at once, before taking it to any one else. 

"Hand it to me through the door," said the **W**idow **A**za. Wrapping herself in a towel, and reaching out a bare arm for the packet, she examined it and found it contained a most beautiful diamond pendant. The stone was cut heart-shaped, and while no metal showed from the front, it was mounted in gold, with delicate filigree doors at the back which could be opened to clean the large white stone. The heart hung from a graceful diamond bow-knot, which was suspended from a slender golden chain.      

Hannah's heart beat faster. Here was a jewel indeed worthy of Rachel, her pearl of daughters, so pious, so devoted. But she controlled the eagerness in her voice: 

"How much?" she inquired of the owner, on the opposite side of the door.   

"That's something very fine, Mistress. I ought to get \$300.00 for that!"   

"Three hundred! Nothing of the sort," said Hannah, not forgetting to be a good business woman, even in her eagerness. "I'll give you \$200.00 in cash right now. Take it or leave it."

The diver took it, and Hannah became the joyful possessor of the beautiful Italian jewel, rescued from the depths. She could scarcely wait until Rachel came home from synagogue to give it to her.

Achy examined it admiringly, and then gazed at her mother in thoughtful silence.

"Mamma, when did you buy this?" at length she asked.

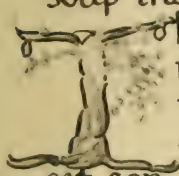
Her mother flushed: "Today."

"Today! On the Sabbath!" Achy's righteous indignation knew no bounds. She absolutely refused to accept the sinfully acquired gift. The doting mother begged and pleaded, but it was hours before the pious daughter consented - not to *accept* it - that she would never do - but to *receive it in trust* for the first daughter she should bear. She also required that her mother give to charity an amount similar to that which she had spent on the trinket.

Achy did give the pendant to her daughter Judith, but frequently wore it herself.)

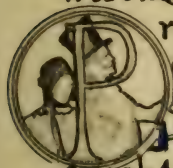
he Widow Piza really enjoyed being in business, and long after it was necessary for her to work, for her sons were successful, and her sons in law generous, we find her still at it. Ben.

and Aaron Luria, the husbands of her daughters Rebecca and Leah, would send her great chests containing samples of merchandise from Hamburg, thinking she might be able to utilize the fineries for herself. But the temptation to make a bargain was too strong for her, and nothing that could be sold would she keep. She gave directions to sewing women to make the silks, laces and fine materials into garments which she sold most advantageously. She was paralyzed for the last ten years of her life, but her indomitable spirit was as lively as yore. We must picture her beautifully dressed in a silken peignoir, a crisp lace cap on her head, seated in a rocking chair with a long table drawn up in front of her. On it are her wares. Nor does she allow her reputation as a splendid cook to languish; frequently she has the coal-pot brought in, placed close beside her rocker. On it she makes "*fungi*" more delicious than anyone else, and a guava soup that has no rival.



The two sons of Joshua Piza by his first marriage, and the nine children by the third alliance, were practically of different generations. Moses, the eldest son, was only eleven years younger than his stepmother. In 1835, the year he married Rebecca Lopez-Fonseca, his father and stepmother became the parents of Leah. Moses' first daughter, Bienvenida, was born a year

later, but before his second child was born eighteen months after that, the older couple had produced Rachel, preceding their grandchild by one month. **H**annahs nine children were a much livlier clan than the sons of the Dutch mother. In the superiority and conceit of their greater number, they used arrogantly to refer to the older branch as the 'half-Pizas'. But their mother was too fair to allow that: "**H**alf-Pizas, indeed!" she stormed. "They are the *real* Pizas. If there are any half-Pizas, it's you!" There could have been no jealousy in her nature, for she named her second daughter 'Benvenida' after her husband's first wife.



Probably it was on account of the closeness of age of uncles and nieces growing up as one generation, that the marriage of **H**annahs son 'Sampi' with her step-grand daughter 'Rache' (second daughter of Moses & Rebecca) came about. They went by the Bible, and in that book the marriage of uncle and niece is nowhere expressly forbidden - (as is the union of aunt and nephew). Eugenics was an unknown science, and the idea that consanguinity was a bar to marriage never occurred to them. So these two were wedded. It was eighteen years after the ministers death, but surely he would have made no objection, for years before he had not protested when

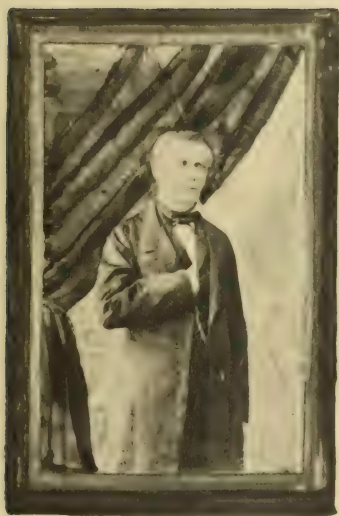
his wife made the match between their eldest - and most beautiful - daughter Judith, and Hannah's brother Judah. After all, the number of people considered eligible as mates for their priestly breed was decidedly limited. The government circle was Danish, foreign, Christian. It was fear of this set that made the Pizas so anxious for the safety of the all too attractive Judith that they thrust her, unwilling, into the arms of her middle-aged uncle. The "natives" were blacks. The Jewish residents who lived in *Longpart*, 'poor Bukra', were common, ordinary; in short, not to be considered. It was among the visiting Jewish merchants who came to St Thomas to trade that several of the sons-in-law were selected. But among the foreigners, those of German '*Tedesco*' origin were looked down upon as not noble enough for distinguished '*Sephardim*' to wed. However, an exception was made in favor of Herman Meyer when he wanted to marry Sarah - for he was such a good match that no sensible parent could object. The young Luria men who were with him in business, though Germans, were Sephardic, and eligible for Rebecca and Leah. Henry Mendes Belisario was welcomed as the first husband of Esther. Hannah, inveterate match-maker, boasted that she had married her nine children ten times. When they were all married and scattered over the globe, Achy Mrs.

Solomon Delvalle) always her mother's favorite, and most devoted child, though herself the mother of twelve children, refused to leave St Thomas as long as the old lady survived.

Hhe last years of the widow's life were spent in a suite of rooms that she rented from some maiden ladies, the Misses Maduro, to whose meagre exchequer the rent was a most welcome addition. In the midst of preparations for the celebration of her 80th birthday, Hannah died of influenza. It was also the 80th year of the Century.







Moses Piza



The Children of Moses and Rebecca Piza.



MOSES, the eldest son of Joshua Piza

and his wife Benvenida Zacuto, had an eventful youth. Born in Amsterdam in 1811, he accompanied his parents on the long hard trip by sailing-vessel to the colony of Curaçao when only four years old. His mother dying shortly after their arrival, he and his infant brother were handed over to the care of their aunt,

Esther Zacuto who for a very brief period became their stepmother. Soon after her death, she was succeeded by a new one, Hannah Sasso, eighteen, eleven years older than Moses.

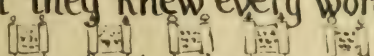
There is every reason to believe that she was kind and just to her step-sons, even with the cares of her own rapidly increasing family.

When Moses was twelve they all went to St. Thomas to live, and there some ten years later, the ageing minister retired from the pulpit, and the boy had to help his mother to support the family which had attained the number of eleven children (including the two by the first marriage).



Blue-eyed, fair and tall was Moses. His disposition was gentle and affectionate. When he was twenty-four, in the year 1835, he married

Rebecca **Lopez** **Fonseca**, of a family distinguished in the annals of Curacao as pioneer settlers and rabbis ever since the middle of the XVII Century. **Moses** had his own store, and now his wife, who was his senior by one year, assisted him. They had six children, five of whom lived: Bienvenida (1836), Joshua (1838) who died in infancy, Rachel (1839), David (1840), Hannah (1841) and Esther (1847).

 **Moses** was a man of imposing mien, and highly respected. In 1844 he was chosen as acting-Reader of the Congregation during an interim in the Rabbinical succession; for **Joshua** **Piza** had so well taught his two eldest boys that they knew every word of the Hebrew services 

 It was in 1847 at the birth of Esther, the youngest child (whose advent six years after Hannah, came as a surprise to the couple then considered middle-aged) that an incident occurred that - according to the legend - had a devastating effect on **Moses**, and indeed on his whole family. **Rebecca** had had a difficult time at the birth, and her baby was being nursed by her sister Leah, whose own infant, **Rachel**, was four months old. Her recovery was slow, and the black midwife in attendance was cross and moody. She did not treat his **Rica** with the gentleness

that the sympathetic Moshe' felt to be her due. Exasperated by some impudence, he slapped her. The negress was furious. She cursed him. Soon after a strange alteration in the nature of the man became apparent. His gentle cheerfulness vanished. People whispered that the nurse had put 'Obeah' on him. Others hinted that she had poisoned him with a venom whose effect was slow.

Whatever caused it, Moses' fine mind gave way, and he became subject to periodic fits of melancholy and more violent insanity, which unfitted him for any work and made him a care and worry to the whole family. ¶¶¶¶¶

On the advice of Dr Preto, the family physician, he was taken to New York and Boston to see if the American doctors could help his case. He went willingly, and made several trips. On one of these, in 1859, his second daughter, Rachel, aged twenty, accompanied him.



In 1862 Rachel married her father's half-brother Samuel ('Sampi'). In 1866 David, twenty-seven, married his cousin Rachel, Judah's daughter; and in 1870, Esther, twenty-two, married her cousin, Josh' Lindo, a year older. ♥ ♥ ♥



Eight years after their marriage, David and Rachel went to New York to live. Their offspring numbered six, and

increased to nine. With the David Pizas came his mother **R**ebbecca, desiring to be near her now helpless spouse who was being treated in a Philadelphia sanatorium; they were also accompanied by Bienvenida and Hannah, David's two unmarried sisters. At the age of sixty-six **R**ebbecca died, in 1876, more than a year before her invalid husband. When it was seen that her death was imminent, Both her married daughters, Rachel Piza in Paris, and Esther Lindo in Panama, made ocean voyages to see her once more, but both arrived too late. In June 1877 **M**oses died and was laid to rest from the house of his son.



Daguerreotype of Rebecca, Esther and Moses in 1860







udah was the only full brother of Moses,

and about four years his junior. Their youthful experiences were similar, but the hardships of the lean years of their boyhood reacted differently on their natures, Moses remaining kindly and gentle as long as he had his mental health, and Judah becoming bad-tempered and fretful. He was homely of face, short and stocky of figure, and he had a reputation for irascibility so well established that, when at the age of thirty-two he wished to marry the lovely Leah Lopez-Fonseca, Moses's sister-in-law, no one was more against the match than Moses.



opposition was unavailing, for in 1845 he married the gentle 'Loche', tall and svelte, twenty-three years old. They had three children, named unoriginally Benvenida (1846), Rachel (1847) and Joshua (1848). As he grew older, Judah's health declined and his irritability increased. About the time that Joshua was *bar-mitsvah*, he began to be a real sufferer from stone, an illness which caused painful paroxysms that so tortured him, that he shut himself in his room and became



practically a hermit. When his periodic agonies shook him, his voice could be heard for blocks. Loche cared for him tenderly. & &

 In 1867 his son left St Thomas for Panama where he and another nephew, Joshua Lindo, were taken into business by their successful uncle, Samuel Piza. "Josh Piza" married Hannah (Anita) Brandon in 1871, and a year later brought her and their infant son to St Thomas to meet his suffering old father and his patient mother. That was a gala day for Judah. The invalid left his room - indeed he walked even to the foot of the hill to bless the young bridegroom and his twenty-year old, sprightly bride. It gave him especial joy that the names of the young couple echoed those of his venerated father and his energetic stepmother.

 Loche died in 1873, when only forty-nine years old. Her illness, undiagnosed at the time, from description seems to have been cancer. Joshua came on to be with his mother at the end. When he returned to Panama, he brought his sister Nida with him to be one of his household. Rachel had married her cousin, David Piza, eleven years before, and was living in New York.

For the rest of his life Judah was faithfully tended by a colored nurse, Ruth. She

and the barber who came weekly to shave him were almost the only people he saw, but they kept him lively with the news and gossip of the town. He had the fascination of mystery for the children of the family who loved to peek at the queer old man hunched up over his prayer-books, but who ran away if he turned and looked in their direction.



In 1892, at the age of seventy-seven he died. Nida, living in New York with the David Pizas had preceded him by nine years. She died unmarried but secretly engaged to one David Lindo, her brother's book-keeper, whose circumstances were such that he could not afford to marry. Her death may be attributed to worry. She was a delicate graceful woman, affectionate and extremely sensitive. Besides the strain of a love affair, of which the consummation seemed hopeless, her tender heart was rent by the feud which ^{separated} her brother Josh from his sister and brother-in-law, the D.M. Pizas, a feud which spread to other branches of the Piza family tree, and even parted foster-sisters.

We must go back some years to give the story of this quarrel.



The first five children of Joshua and Anita Piza, three boys and two girls were born in Panama. In 1878 the couple had the misfortune to lose,

within the space of four months, their three sons, Arturo, Adrian and an unnamed infant. The twenty-six year old mother was beside herself, and became dangerously ill. Josh decided to take her to New York in the hope of saving her life which was hanging by a thread. She survived the voyage, and began to improve in the new surroundings. He would never take her back to the scene of her terrible bereavement her husband declared. So they settled in New York with their two surviving children, Leah and Aimée, and Josh's sister Nida. But soon the head of the house had to go back to Panama to take his share in the responsibility in Saml Piza & Co. He divided his time between his family in New York and his business in Panama. However, it was three months for the family and nine for the business, and after three or four years, Josh, who was essentially domestic, decided he could no longer live that way, and determined to quit the business. He talked over his plans with his uncle Sam, the senior and controlling partner, and it was projected instead to open a branch of the business in New York with Josh Piza in charge. Previous to this arrangement, David M. Piza had had the agency for his uncle-brother-in-law's affairs in New York. Although he was allowed to retain for himself all the customers he had, he was furious at the new arrangement.

ment, and declared that Josh Piza was taking the very bread from the mouths of his own sister's children. He severed all social relations with his uncle Sam, and his cousins Josh Piza and Josh Tindo - who were also his brothers-in-law - and would not allow his wife Rachel to see her brother. Nida, who was living with the Josh Pizas in twenty-third street was forbidden his house by David, as long as she came there from the home of one of those who David felt, had used him so badly.

Foor sensitive Nida was nearly distracted, torn between her love for her brother Josh's family and her sister Rachel's. She decided finally that if she went to reside with David and Rachel she could still visit Josh and Anita; so that was her next move. But when her ill-used brother-in-law became aware that she still kept up with that family, he forbade it. The unhappy young woman became hysterical and weak and soon faded away.





HAIM PIZA

JUDAH PIZA m 1833 LUNA AMUBI

MOSES PIZA m 1863 SARA PALACHI

Joshua Piza m 1816 Hannah Sasso

1772 - 1830

1800 - 1880

I. JUDITH m JUDAH SASSO

1819 -

HANNAH m

ABRAM MADURO

1837 - 1913

JULIUS m

ADA D'ACOSTA

1834 -

VERA

EDITH m CHESTER DUBAL BOOTH

1868

1885

EVELYN m RAYMOND VALLE CONRAD

Arthur

Austin

Lyn

Helen

Wendeth

Chester

Adeline Parker

John Parker

Patricia

Philip

Phyllis

Leah

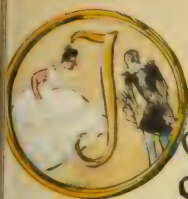
Gloria

Mary Malcolm

Chester

Austin Parker

Descendents of Joshua Piza's eldest Daughter. (3rd child)



Judith was the hand-
somest as well as the

eldest of Hannah and Joshua Piza's seven well-favored daughters. She was attractive & popular, but alas, not with the set that her parents wished her to marry into. It was the wealthy Government circle, and the gay young Danish officers that occupied her thoughts, a group whose attentions to a beautiful but impecunious young Jewish girl could bode no good, her anxious parents felt. They could not mean matrimony, but even if they did - they were *Christians!* The Reverend Joshua, and even Hannah, could not face the thought of such disgrace. They must get the girl married and out of the way of temptation.    



There was a Jewish young man who admired her, but so faint hearted a youth that he lacked the courage to press his suit. He put his case in the hands of Judith's uncle, Judah Sasso, and begged him to find out if he would be acceptable. Judah, who cherished a secret admiration for the buxom girl, went straight to his sister:

"Hannah, who do you think would make Judith a better husband, that young snip

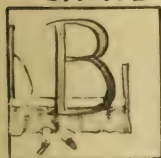
So-and-So, or I?"

Now **H**annah loved her brother, who was considered well-to-do; and besides, she thought this luscious girl would be better off guarded by an older man. So she gave her consent to their marriage. **J**udith was not yet sixteen, and **J**udah about forty!



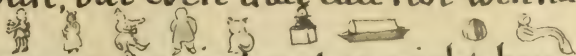
However the girl was still to be reckoned with. She refused to have anything to do with the skinny old man, snubbing him at every opportunity. Her mother kept after her persistently. One morning she invaded her daughter's bed-chamber when the girl was hardly awake. Speaking of the affair years after, **J**udith, who never forgave her mother for forcing her, said:

"I was sleepy, and she kept fretting, till finally in sheer weariness, I said 'Yes.' Then I turned over and went to sleep."



But when her uncle came to see her after this decision, the girl was nowhere to be found. Later she was discovered hiding under a bed, and she had to be forcibly pulled out before she would meet her fiancé. During the engagement that followed she was constantly contriving not to be left alone with her betrothed. She used to bribe her sister **B**envanida to stay in the room. The unwelcome lover did his best to capture the

girl's young affections: he brought her dolls to play with, but even that did not win her heart.



They were married, and as might have been predicted, there was no happiness for either of the ill-assorted pair. Judith was statuesque, imperious, vain. She took great pride in

her remarkably beautiful hands, and carefully manicured her filbert nails - no one else in their set indulged in such nonsense. She manufactured carefully, creams for her face, and pomades for her lovely hair. Judah, well aware that all this effort was not for him, objected to these vanities, and tried to keep his dashing beauty at home. He was frankly, shamelessly jealous. They quarreled incessantly - and *not* quietly. The young virago scratched her husband. Comparing their physiques, it is easy to see that she got the better of him. But even in the midst of her most violent rages she did not forget her vanity, but would pause in her tantrum to smooth out the wrinkles that had collected in her alabaster brow. Time and again Judah, driven from the house, would rush to his sister Hannah for comfort after a scene with her violent daughter. Sometimes Judith would lock him in his room, and herself go out. At one time they went to live with her parents who acted



JUDITH



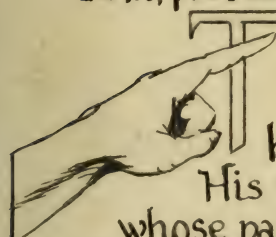
JOSEPH



as mediators in their quarrels.

fter some futile struggles, Judah gave up striving for mastery, and Judith did as she pleased. She even had her own bedroom, — which was considered scandalous. They had two children, Hannah and Julius; the girl inherited her father's meagre physique, and was never a favorite with her mother; but the boy, handsome and attractive, was her eyes. 

udith read voraciously, and was ambitious to see more of the world than St. Thomas. As her husband said they could not afford to travel, she set about earning the wherewithall for a trip. She did this quite easily by importing shoes from France and selling them at a good profit to the negroes. She went into society richly and tastefully dressed. It was commonly said that the Governor of St. Thomas was at her feet. In later years she went frequently to Europe. Julius, established with a Parisian firm, provided generously for his mother.

he great tragedy of her bitter life was his death. He had married at thirty in Paris, where he was employed by a Mr Dreyfus.

His wife, a handsome English girl, whose parents were from St Thomas, was Ada Da Costa. It was not one of the arranged'

French marriages, but a real love affair; for Ada's father failed in business during the period of the betrothal and offered to release the young man from his engagement, as Mr Da Costa could not now provide the appropriate dowry that was part of the marital agreement in every dignified union in French society. That Julius disdained the offer seems only natural to us, but it caused much favorable comment at the time. He and Ada were married and had two children, Conrad and Vera. They were blissfully happy. Then Mr Dreyfus transferred Julius to Peru so that he might there manage a branch of his business. He took his family with him; but peace vanished in the new country. A brother-in-law of Mr Dreyfus became ill, and Julius generously took him into his home, and he and Ada nursed him back to health. Then he discovered that his hospitality had been rewarded by a love affair between his wife and their patient. Leaving a note saying that he died of a broken heart, Julius shot himself. Disconcerted by the gossip that centred around her, Ada fled to Paris, where later she married a Mr Reye, the man Julius had named in his will as guardian of his children.



Judith lived for some years in Hamburg. Her husband died while she was abroad, having spent his last years at the home of the Solomon Maduros, (his wife's sister

and brother-in-law. The last couple of decades of Judith's long life were passed in New York, sometimes residing with her daughter Hannah - whose married life with Abram Caduro was hardly more felicitous than her mother's with Judah - sometimes, after violent quarrels with her daughter, living by herself.

The manner of her death in 1896 was characteristic, and in keeping with her passionate life. She was running after a young South American lad who boarded with them, to chastise him with an umbrella, when she slipped and fell and broke her leg. As she was nearly eighty, the bone did not knit, and she died of the pneumonia that resulted from her long stay in bed.



Dear mother

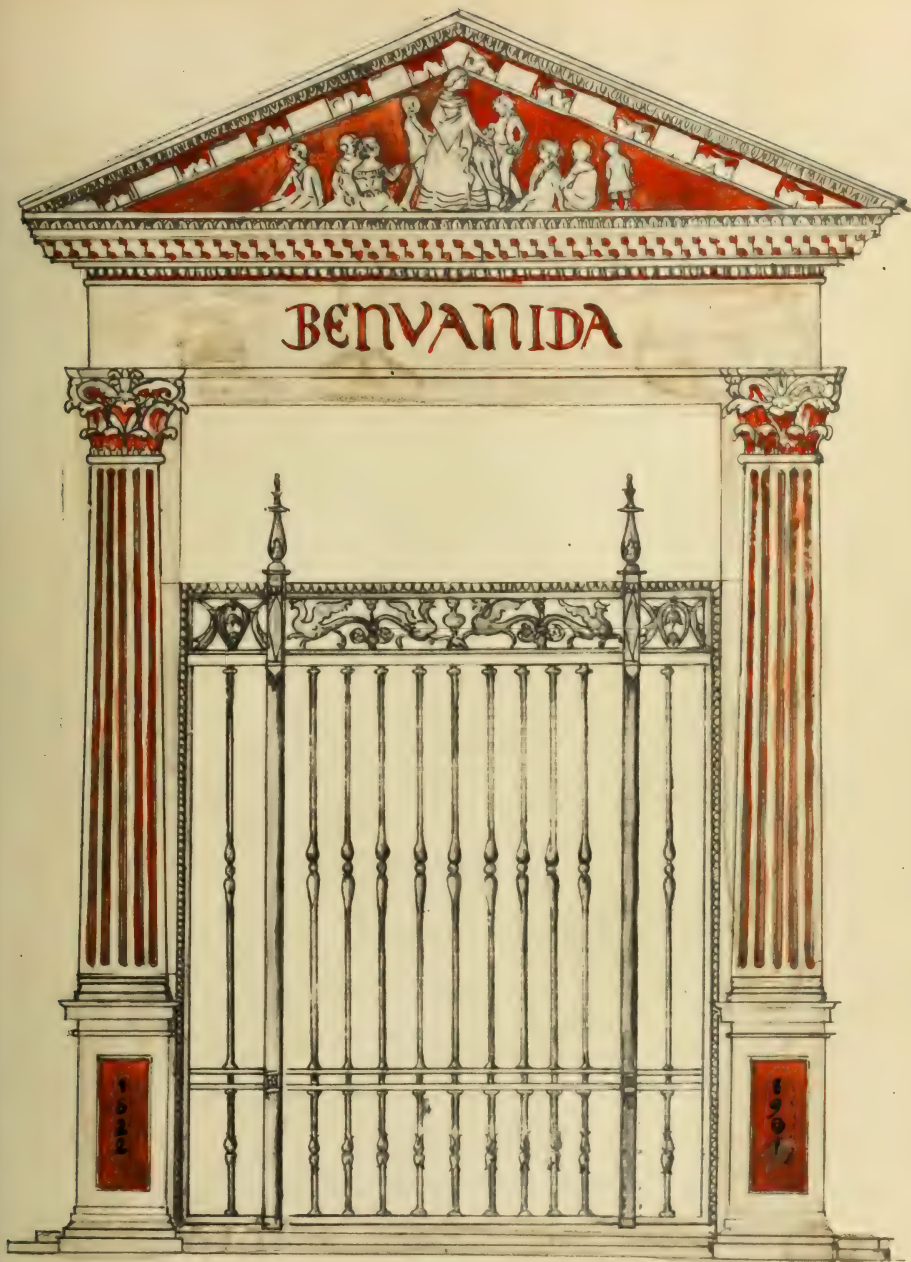
I die of a broken heart. What
I most regret is that I can't leave
you & my family well off nor even
sufficient to maintain you

Love to Anna her girls & for your
fond embraces & love

Your affd son
Jul. Locke

Mr. Judith Jones

New York



HAIM PIZA

JUDA PIZA m 1723 LUNA ANUBI

MOSES PIZA m 1763

SARA PALACHI

Joshua Piza 1816 m Hannah Sasso
1772 - 1850 1800 - 1890

1822 - 1901

II BENVANIDA m 1844 JACOB LINDO

1821 - 1884

1845 1930
MORRIS

m MARIA HINAWA

1847 1914
JOSHUA

m ESTHER PIZA

1849
EMILY

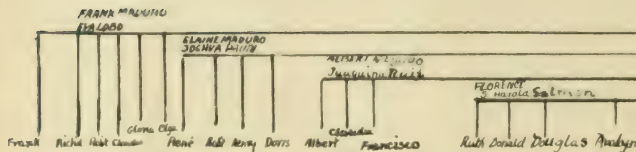
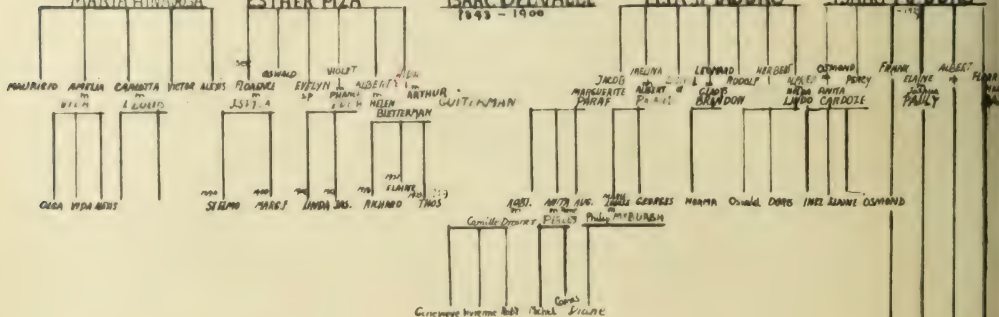
m ISAAC DELVALLE
1843 - 1900

1870 1925
ANITA

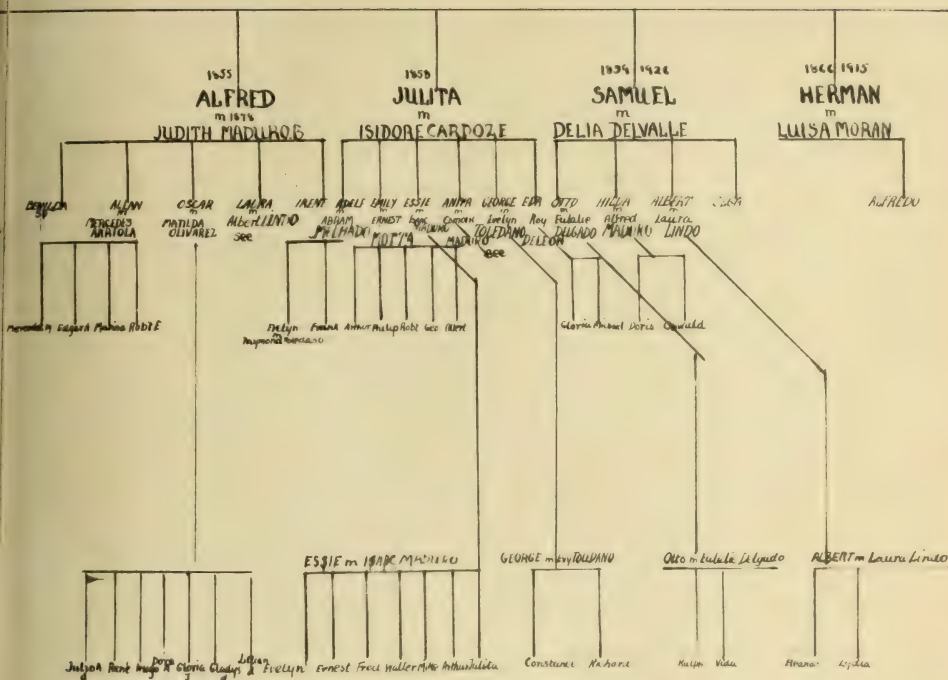
m ELIAS MADURO

1855
CLARITA

m ISAAC MADURO



Descendants of Joshua Piza's



Second Daughter (4th Child)

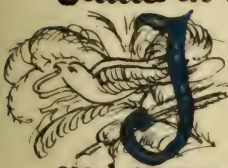


In contrast with the sad life of MOSES,

the drab existence of Judah, and the tragedy of Judith's mismating, the happy domesticity of **BENVANDA** is especially pleasing. As the second daughter, she had Judith's loveless marriage before her as a horrible example. Determined to wed only for love, to her parents' disappointment she refused the offer of a wealthy relative of her father. Her heart was set on Handsome Jack Lindo, a young man of good character, and likable; but poor, and apparently without much business ability. Judith, two years her senior, encouraged her plucky sister to adhere to her selection, and with this backing she was ^{able} to persist in her choice for so long that finally she wore down her mother's objection. So in 1844, when Bem was twenty-three, she married Jacob Jesurun Lindo, who was about the same age.

They kept a store: that seems to have been the only known way of making a living in St Thomas. But there were too many stores already and after their first child, Morris, was born the Lindos went to seek their fortune in Barcelona, Venezuela. They never made

much money, but were a contented loving couple. Children came fast. The first year they were in Barcelona, Joshua was born (1847). The twins, Emily and Anita arrived in 1849. Clarita appeared in 1853, followed by Alfred in 1855, Julita in 1858 and Samuel in 1859.



ack Lindo was known for his good nature. He wrote a beautiful hand and was always willing to oblige his friends by inscribing fine flourished invitations and announcements for them. His literary style was considered good and he was often required to compose important letters. An accurate accountant, he would obligingly straighten out muddled books. But he never received any recompense for these favors, much to his wife's disgust.



envanida was well liked. She was tall and fine looking. She had her mother's energy and her father's love of reading. She had 'admirers'. Once, at a ball, a Spaniard made love to her. Perhaps it tickled her vanity, for she allowed him to plead a while; then she turned a look of withering scorn on the dapper little man, bade him compare himself with her big handsome grey-eyed husband - and Begone!



bram Lindo, the brother of Jacob, also lived in Venezuela. He was tall and fair, and not unlike Samuel Piza in appearance. When Abram, who



2 The Twins, Emily and Anita Lindo. &

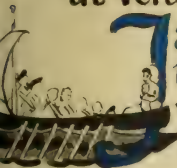
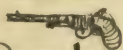
ONE EVENING in Barcelona, five years after their marriage, Benvenida was dressing to go to a ball with her husband. She was suddenly taken ill, and before she could be undressed she gave birth to a daughter. Attendants then tried to make her comfortable in bed, but she continued to suffer. Soon a second baby was born, Lindo! called the horrified wife, "What is this? Am I an animal to give birth one after another like this?" Anita and Emily

Lindo are the only twins recorded in that generation of the Piza family. We recall, however, that one generation earlier Joshua Piza's second wife died at the birth of twins. No twins are known to have been born in the family to any of the contemporaries of Anita and Emily, but in the generation following there are at least two instances: those born to Gladys Brandon Wein, and those of Austin Donaldson.

Jacob Piza's daughter Leah married Isidore Gabriel has twin girls, and his daughter Uda, the wife of Isidore Phillips has twin sons.



had no enemies, was shot down in the street, every one said that he had been mistaken for Samuel, the Don Juan of the family, who had business connections — and connections of other sorts — in Venezuela.



Jacob and **B**envanida remained in Barcelona for fifteen years, but in 1861 the country was in such a condition of political unrest that it was dangerous to be on the streets on account of the revolutionists' snipings. **B**em persuaded her husband, for the sake of their children, if not for themselves, to leave this perilous country. She took the children with her and sailed back to St Thomas, the old home, where **J**acob soon joined them. Poor as they were, they were made welcome by the family. The lovely grandchildren were a great joy to old **H**annah — "**G**randma **P**iza", as she was called by the whole community — during the twenty years that they lived there. **E**mily was a born housewife, always doing something helpful. **A**nita, her twin, was entirely different in appearance and character — she was aristocratic, high-spirited and socially inclined. **C**larita was pretty, with delicate features and soft brown eyes; but her real beauty was definitely marred by the traces a siege of smallpox had left. **J**ulita, dashing and sprightly, the third in the direct line to inherit **G**randma **P**iza's verve and energy, was that old lady's especial favorite.

The **L**indo's youngest child, **Herman**, was born in St Thomas.



Jacob Lindo secured a position as book-keeper-accountant to a large business house. In the congregational life he was prominent. As an excellent Hebraist, on occasions he was called upon to read the prayers. (We find no evidence of his having an official position until much later.) Just as had been the case in Curaçao fifty years earlier when **Joshua Piza** had left his pastorate because he was given no freedom; just as in 1844 **Moses** and **Judah** had fretted over trivial details of the ritual in St Thomas (whether they had migrated for freedom's sake), so still in 1867 did pettiness persist. Alas, **Jacob's** name appears in the synagogue records as a protestant against the laxity of the minister, the Reverend **Dr. Nathan**.



In 1869, when he was forty-five years old, **Jacob** was stricken with paralysis. Shortly before, he had joined the staff of his wealthy brother in law, **Herman Meyer**, at a salary better than he had ever in his life received; but he had to give up the position because of his affliction. He lived for fifteen years after his first illness, but was naturally no longer to be counted upon as a breadwinner. However, the sons were grown or growing up. **Morris** was twenty-

To the Editor of the Voice of Jacob.

St Thomas, May 28, 1844.

Sir,

In No. 67 of your interesting work, under the head of St Thomas, at page 4, we observe that in reference to a charge of omission of the Musaf, made by a correspondent you have, depending on Mr Carillon's statement, declared that the said charge is not established. As we are acquainted with the said correspondent, and know beyond all manner of doubt, that the date of his communication (Eul 2603), immediately after the Afer Torah was returned to the Akehal, Mr Carillon proceeded with En Kelohem and that the Musaf was entirely omitted, we sign this in justice to your said correspondent, who would otherwise appear to have asserted what was not true.

I H Csorio Jer L. Maduro J Judany Jr.
Moses Piza Judah Piza

The undersigned declare that in consequence of the omission of the Musaf, they did not attend the Synagogue.

Judah Gasso. Mashed Meara.

St Thomas, 26th February 1867.

To the Board of Representatives of the Hebrew Congregation B'nai Egl.
Gentlemen;

We the undersigned members & taxpayers of the above named Congregation beg leave to bring under your notice that Art. 33 of the Bye Laws is violated by the Minister & request you to give all attention possible to our complaint which runs thus: 1st according to the above we understand that the Minister is bound to preach on every Sabbath & Holy days & which he does not. 2dly: the Mincha is abolished consequently the Synagogue closed why? because the minister never attends thereat. 3dly: Instead of the Minister being present in the Synagogue on Saturday evenings to perform the duties of his office as he ought to he has often been seen by many of the Congregants attending to the collection of deposits at the Savings Bank during the hour of Divine Service. As we are desirous of seeing these abuses corrected & the articles of the Bye Laws properly carried out, we respectfully request you to give this matter your serious consideration.

We are Gentlemen

Yours Respectfully

Jacob Lindo.
(and others)



Quarrels in the Congregation Persist!

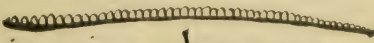
four and a partner in his uncle "Coco" Piza's business; Joshua was twenty-two and established with his uncle "Sampi". The parents never had to worry while these boys were getting on so well in Panama. Emily, Anita and Clarita were married; Emily, the only^{one} of that prolific brood to produce no offspring, to Isaac Delvalle (a brother of her Aunt Achee's husband); Anita to Elias Maduro, with whom she went to live in Paris — which was appropriate indeed, for had it not always been said that she had the air of a *duchesse*? And Clarita to Isaac Maduro, of a family quite distinct from Elias's.



With the boom which attended the commencement of the "French Canal" (1879-1889), and which lasted from its inception until the work was stopped by the frightful mortality from yellow fever among the foreigners, the Lindo's went to live in Panama. They and their connections, with a generation or two of tropical life in their blood, seemed to be immune from the plague. Whilst the Europeans died like flies, a little malaria now and then was the worst that the West Indians suffered. The household now consisted of Jacob and Benvenida, Morris, the vivacious young Julita, and Herman aged fifteen. Joshua had married his blue-eyed cousin Esther Piza, the Irish beauty of the family in St Thomas, and for more than ten years had had his own home in Panama. Clarita and Isaac

were in San Domingo at that time. Morris, easy-going and good natured, was regarded as an old bachelor, and technically lived at home with his parents. Everyone knew that he was the head of a native "outside" family. It was not until some years after his mother's death that he married Maria Hinojosa, the mother of his children in justice to their rights. In their youth Morris and Josh, with only two years difference in their ages, were separately identified as "Lindo Feo" and "Lindo Lindo". The year '84 was eventful: after a trip to Europe with her brother Sam, Julita returned to Panama and married Isidore Cardoze. The same year Benvenida took Jacob, whose health was failing, to Jamaica for a trip. He died there on New Year's morning '85.

Returning to Panama, the widow went to live with her daughter Emily. She and Isaac Delvalle had adopted their niece Estelle (daughter of Rachel and Solomon Delvalle). Benvenida stayed with them until they departed for St Thomas, when the old lady made her home with her daughter Julita. It was a large menage, and the size was constantly being increased by visits of nephews and grandsons from all over the world. Jacob Piza, who had long been a resident of England sent his sons down to the Isthmus to look after his interests. Young Lurias, a new gen-

eration, arrived from Hamburg. Wise in experience, but ever marvelously young in spirit, the old lady naturally took her place as matriarch of the tribe. She kept well posted on topics of the day, and so enjoyed reading her newspaper that it was often difficult to persuade her to come to meals. Once when some matter of public interest was being discussed at breakfast (the 11 o'clock meal), and **Bem** knew more about the subject than anyone else, Joshua said to his mother, somewhat skeptically: 

"Mamma, I can't imagine where you got that from! - I read the papers too!"

It developed that **Mamma** had read the French sheet of the trilingual Panama daily, while the younger people had been satisfied to peruse the Spanish and English pages. We must be impressed by this, for **Benvenida** (and **Judith**) had had almost no formal education, and all their considerable accomplishments were self acquired. 

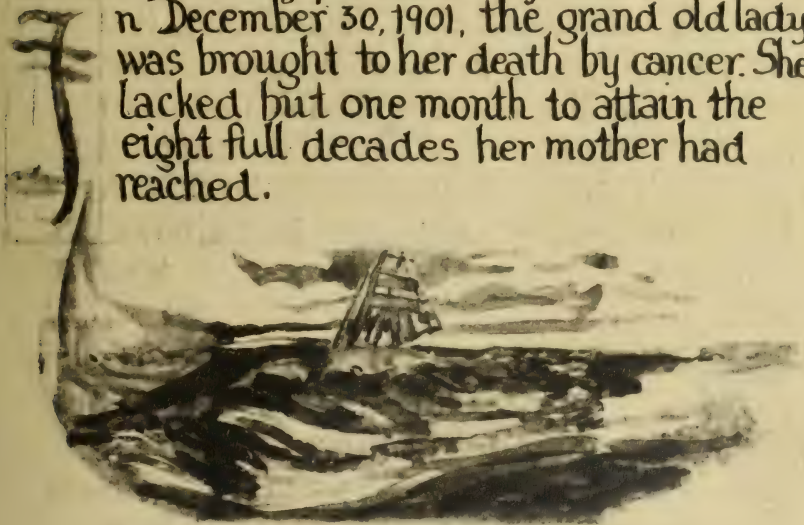
 The Royal Families of Europe were always of especial interest to her, and Queen Victoria, who was about her age, she regarded as a sister. Bismark she particularly hated, for through him Schleswig-Holstein had been taken from Denmark, which **Bem** considered her Fatherland. "Beast-Mark" she sneeringly called him.

She was an ardent Zionist, and that was long before the movement became popular. She kept huge scrap-books in which she pasted clippings on all her favorite topics. The whole Dreyfus case was there; also poems that appealed to her. Byron with his zest for life was her favorite, and she was fond of quoting him at length.



As a match maker, she was just as assiduous as her mother had been. She declared she would like to see the boys marry at eighteen and the girls at sixteen. Her letters to relatives abroad always contained the wish that their children would soon find "worthy partners in Israel." ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

I n December 30, 1901, the grand old lady was brought to her death by cancer. She lacked but one month to attain the eight full decades her mother had reached.





Clarita & Isaac Maduro. Morris Lindo. Joshua & Esther Lindo.
 Isaac & Emily Delvalle. JACOB & BENJAMINA LINDO. Anita & Elias Maduro.
 Herman Lindo. Julita Lindo. Sam Lindo. Judith & Alfred Lindo.

Jacob and Benvarida Lindo and their Children.

Pinto
Naar
Henriques
Pardo
Seixas
De Pinna
Cardozo
Simmons
Levy
Robles
Cappe
Torres
Correa
Senior
Maduro

Abendanon
Curriel
Wolff
Benjamin
Lopez
da Costa
Julias
Valencia
Abrams
Hoheb
Demeza
Martins
de Castro
De Lima
Suarez

Julien
Sasso
Rodriguez
de Sola
Grocina
Garcia
Monsanto
Rothschild
Caseres
Deitzevedo
Oliviera
Nunes
Levenson
Dalmeyda
Finsie

Names in the St Thomas Congregation.

DIED Moses H Pinna, by the kick of
a horse on the Sabbath Day.
June, 1836

Extract from the Synagogue Records.



JACOB

1824 - 1896



HAIM PIZA

Juda Piza married 1723 Luna Jshubi

Mozes Piza married 1743 Sarah Palachi

1772-1850 JOSHUA PIZA married 1816 HANNAH SASSO 1800-1880

Nov. 13
1824 - 1886
St. Thomas

JACOB PIZA married in

ANITA
married
JOHN HANDS

Samuel
married
Maud Samuel

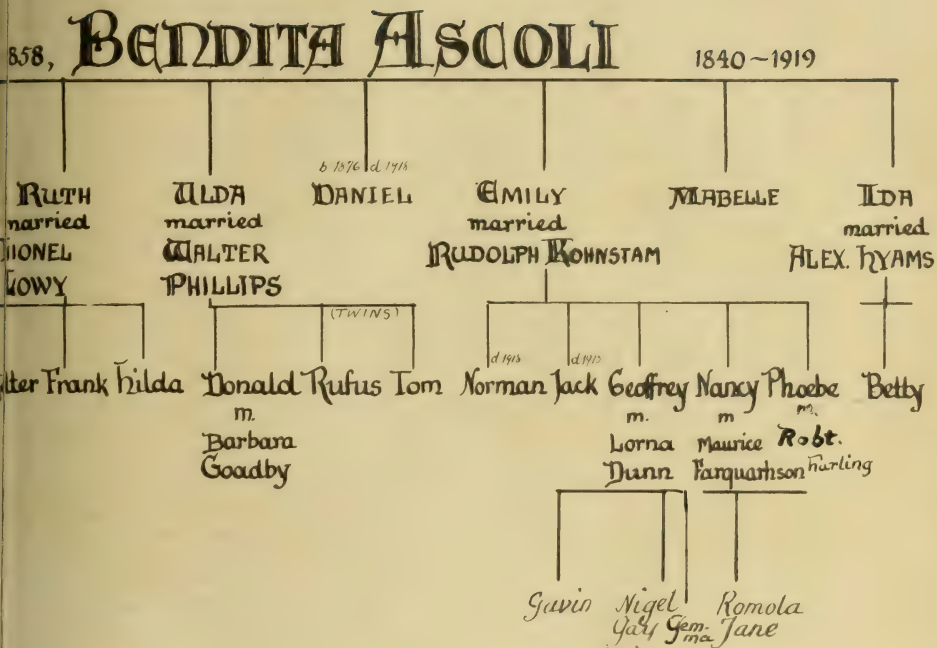
d. 1926
BETTINA
married
JACOB CARO

Jack Mary
m.
Adolphus
Richardson
Bettina

b. 1866 d. 1883 b. 1867 d. 1884
JOSHUA SAMUEL WALTER LEAH
married
WILLIAM
GABRIEL

Maurice Bendita Lillian
m. m. m.
Barbara Joseph Jim
Kleinert Lowy Benecry
Peggy Mar
Anne Jane

DESCENDANTS of



OSKUA PIZA'S 5th CHILD

This Chart made in 1934





Jacob Piza, the first born son of Joshua

and **Hannah** arrived in 1824, after the exodus from Curacao. His boyhood in St Thomas was a time of greater prosperity for the family than had been those earlier years in the Dutch colony. We have already related that when Jacob and his brother **Samuel** were grown, their mother gave them each a thousand dollars to start them in business. Although the loss of the hard-earned money by shipwreck in the swirling Chagres seemed a tragedy at the time, they made their way very successfully. After the brothers' bitter quarrel, Samuel called his enterprize "Samuel Piza and Company, and Jacob - or **Coco**, as he was invariably dubbed - called his "Piza Piza. There was no Piza in it but himself: he merely wanted to make his firm the most Piza of all! His was a stern, unforgiving nature, which made him carry this quarrel, the cause of which has been lost through the decades, on even to the second generation; for he would never personally receive Samuel's son when as a lad he visited England. The brothers' children, however, became the best of friends.



He was a fine-looking man with a stern expression and a soldierly bearing. When he was ready to marry, he declared he would wed no young lady whose opportunities had been limited to the West Indies and Panama. He would marry a European girl, and none but a beauty. His business interests took him abroad frequently, and when he met Bendita Ascoli in Hamburg, he knew he had found his ideal in this very young and handsome girl. But her parents, though poor, were in no haste to marry off a mere child, especially while her older - and less attractive - sister Buenhora remained unclaimed. They tried to persuade Jacob, a man in his thirties, to take the elder sister instead. The suitor had made his choice and refused to swerve. However the family was equally determined that Bendita should not marry until Buenhora was off their hands. The result was that Jacob occupied himself trying to find a mate for the older one. The story is that he had to wait seven years for his bride, like his namesake in the Bible. This tale cannot be credited though, as Bendita was only about eighteen years old when they did marry in 1860. She had a well to do uncle by the name of Jasse who offered a modest dowry, but Jacob would not allow his bride to accept it.

After the wedding, he brought his statuesque blue-eyed spouse to Panama. She charmed them all. "Lard!" the negroes cried, "Mr Coco sure did bring home a doll!" But quite evidently the climate did not agree with her, for three times she started on the road to motherhood, and three times she lost her child. Leaving his Panama affairs in the hands of his nephew Morris Lindo, Jacob, whose interests were largely abroad, took his wife to Manchester, England; and there they made their home for many years. Evidently the climate - or the stars - were favorable, for Bendita became the mother of eleven children in rapid succession. Later, when they lived in London, they had two more.

Perhaps it was while Coco was new to England, and the conquistador attitude of the West Indies still clung to him, that he was hailed into court for striking an impertinent servant girl. He cheerfully paid the fine of a pound, and said it was worth it.

The head of Piza-Piza made frequent trips across the ocean to keep his eye on his thriving business. Once he stopped off at St Thomas to see his old mother. It was so long since he had been there that he was not generally recognized, though

everyone commented on the likeness of the visitor to **Mr. Sampi**. He was not as handsome as his brother, though both were of imposing appearance. **Jacob** had a large face and a leonine head of shaggy grey hair. When his eldest son **Joshua** was seventeen, he brought him out from England to learn the business. A year or so later he sent over his second son, **Samuel**. This proved most unfortunate, for soon the boy, a tall and handsome youth, was taken ill with yellow fever and died. **Jacob** was very bitter and felt that his son had not received proper care, and said so in no weak terms. The next year he brought out his son **Walter** to train him into the business. This one was stricken down before his very eyes with the same dread disease; and he could not say that the lad did not have the best of care.

It was in Panama that **Coco** himself died in 1886, years later. While strolling in the street he stopped to play with a child, when he was prostrated by a heart attack. He was carried into the nearest store and his son **Jossy** was sent for. The young man arrived just as his father was expiring. **Jacob Piza's** life presents a picture of stubborn sternness, but also of strict integrity. **endita** lived to be an old lady, always handsome, and with a bearing as soldierly as her husband's. She was very much the ruler of her large family. All but two of the nine

daughters married: Anita to John Hands, Bettina to Harry Caro, Leah to Walter Gabriel, Ruth to Lionel Lowy, Hildah to Walter Phillips, Emily (Dottie) to Rudolph Kohnstam, and Ida to Alexander Hyams. Florence, the third daughter became a nurse and later the matron of a hospital. After years of hard work and sacrifice she had retired, when the Great War broke out, and she volunteered for service again. She worked so untiringly and effectively that she twice received Royal Decorations. Mabelle, next to the youngest, tall handsome and vivid, was the other daughter who did not marry. She became a militant suffragette in the days of Mrs Pankhurst. The vote gained, she devoted her splendid energies to the study of horticulture, and practiced her profession in England and in Palestine. The eldest son Joshua, who had been brought to Panama in his youth, devoted his life to the business and branched out into many new enterprises - pearl-fisheries, cattle-ranches, and the establishment and maintenance of an electric-light and power plant. He has not married. Daniel, the only other son to grow to full manhood, was killed in the World War. Four of Jacob's grandsons gave their lives in the same cause.

Walter Lowy



Jack Caro
Missing

Dios dió, y Dios lo quiere
Sea el nombre de Dios Bendito
Aqui reposan los restos Mortales
del apreciable joven

SAMUEL
Hijo de Jacob y Bendita
PIZA

Nació en Manchester Inglaterra
10 de Agosto 1866
Murió en esta ciudad
Doce días después su Llegada
6 de Junio 1883

תנ"ך

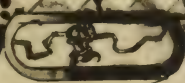
y Jacob anduvo
por su camino, y los Angeles
de Dios le encontraron en camino
Aqui reposan los restos Mortales
Señor Don **JACOB**
hijo de Reydon Ismael y Haman
PIZA

Bendita Piza
Nació en San Tomas (Guaymas)
14 de Noviembre 1864
Murió en esta ciudad
8 de Agosto 1886
Panamá.

WALTER
Hijo de Jacob y Bendita
PIZA
Nació en Manchester Inglaterra
14 Septiembre 1867
Murió en esta ciudad Panamá
Seis semanas después su llegada
4 Abril 1886

DANIEL
son of Jacob and Bendita
PIZA
born in Manchester, England
1876
Died on the battlefield, fighting
for his country in the
Great War
on his 42nd Birthday
1918

Died
Norman Kohnstamm
in the March
rebelat
1918



Entered
at the age of sixteen
Jack Kohnstamm
Died in France
1918





HAIM PIZA

JUDA PIZA m 1125 LUNA AHUBI

MOZES PIZA m 1165 SARA PALACHI

Joshua Piza m 1816 Hannah Sasso

1772 - 1850

1800 - 1880

May 1
1827 - 1885
St. Thomas

1859 - 1892

VI SAMUEL PIZA m 1862 RACHEL PIZA

1863 1901
ANNIE
D.

1865
JOSHUA
m 1873
FLORENCE LINDO

1895 1953
STELPID TOWER

1900
MARGARET F.
m
Percy
Hatfield
Crane

1869
ROSALIE
m 1880
H. PEREIRA MENDES

HEBER
D.

PIZA
m

EDITH WISEMAN

PEREIRA m 2
DOROTHY BELAIS

Rena
Rothenberg

ALVIN PIZA
m

Peggy
Dree

MARGOT
m

Frank
Oppen-
heimer

ARNOLD
m

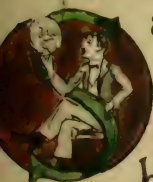
Mona
Schneider

Descendants of Joshua Piza's Sixth Child



Decidedly the most interesting of all

the Piza's sons and daughters was **SAMUEL**. He had good looks, charm and ability, combined with a positive genius for making friends. Laws that were made for others did not seem to be meant for him; he broke them and was forgiven because he was **Sampi**.



Sampi it was who started the business that at one time or another took in most of the young men of the family; **Sampi** who had the enterprise to

branch out from Panama to Maricao, Barcelona, San José, Alajuela, Paris and New York; **Sampi** who, hailed as a conqueror when he returned to St Thomas on visits, unerringly selected the brightest of the young lads, and took away from the decaying town to send as his lieutenants on his scattered commercial ventures.



Born on May 1, 1827, he was the fourth child of Hannah and the sixth of Joshua, two-and-a-half years the junior of his brother Jacob. He was much more the fine gentleman than Coco. He enjoyed and cultivated the arts.

Once as a young man in St Thomas, while walking in the moonlight, he heard a beautiful female voice singing gloriously. He halted in front of the mansion of the wealthy Morrones, and listened entranced. The garden gate was locked, so **S**ampi scaled the high wall that surrounded the residence—one of the finest in St Thomas—and soon found himself in the midst of a party that was being given for the fourteen year old Adelina Patti, who chanced to be passing through with her father.



Wherever **S**amuel went he was popular. Panama was his headquarters for years after he left St Thomas at the age of twenty-two. The natives, some of aristocratic old Spanish families, liked and welcomed him. He fell deeply in love with one Amalia Diaz, but the thought of a marriage into this Catholic family so horrified all the **P**izas, that he put it aside once and for all. The charm of the lovely Amalia was too strong to be resisted, and he formed a connection with her that resulted in the birth of a son Benjamin in 1856, and of Alberto a couple of years later. This is the matter to which we refer when we say that laws were made for others, and not for **S**amuel. Everyone knew of his love-affair, yet everyone accepted the situation. He was as popular

as before, and Amalia and the children, though not *publicly* recognised, were frequent visitors at the homes of his sisters, who were very fond of the graceful, gentle fawn-eyed creature, whose modest demeanor, and faithfulness to their brother, were never questioned.



This was the situation when Samuel went back to St Thomas on one of his business trips. The hero was home, and there was general rejoicing. The affair of Amalia was known of course but the family, absolutely accustomed to the casual armours of the men in the tropics, refused to believe this one of any unusual importance. If they could only get him to marry some fine Jewish girl he would soon forget the Spanish woman. He was regarded as a great catch - financially successful, physically attractive, and of a fascinating personality - there was not a young lady who would not be proud to marry him. When he was about to set out on his travels again, he was requested by his mother to look out for an eligible husband for his niece Rachel Piza, second daughter of Moses and Rebecca. She was twenty-three years old and fairly attractive, but suitable mates were not easily found in that little island, which all the promising

young men deserted as soon as they found an opportunity. So **S**ampi, who in his various enterprises came in contact with many successful men, was given **R**achel's picture to show that she was pleasant to look upon. He could himself report on her pious affectionate nature.



The plan would doubtless have worked had not **S**amuel discovered just before he sailed that **R**achel was in love with *him*. (Bear in mind that uncle-and-niece marriages were not frowned upon by synagogue or society). He discovered in a book left carelessly about, a letter which she had written only for her own spiritual relief, but which she had failed to destroy. It was addressed to "My Lover-Uncle", and showed that her whole heart and mind were devoted to **S**amuel. He was soft hearted and emotional: he could not bear to be unkind to anyone. She loved him! The family, particularly his sisters Leah and Rebecca, urged and encouraged him, already thirty-five years old, to enter into a respectable married life with this eminently suitable young woman of the same religious and social stock as himself. They became engaged just before he sailed.

He suffered pangs of remorse, but being a man of his word, would not break

the engagement, though his sister Achy, with a deeper understanding than the others of his attachment for Amalia, advised him to do so. The rest of the family was sure it was for the happiness of all concerned. He married Rachel in 1862 with the clear understanding that she must receive his sons Benja and Alberto, whom he had legally acknowledged in the courts of Panama. And Sam promised to break off relations with Amalia Diaz.



They both misjudged their strength.

The pitiful interview the man had with his faithful mistress when he told her the situation resulted in the total breakdown of all his virtuous resolutions.

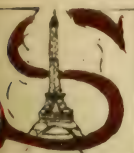
Another child, Julio, was born to them about the same time that his wife gave birth to their daughter Annie.

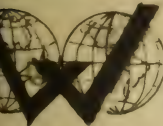


Our little Annie was a cripple from birth, and a thorn in the flesh of her father, who loved beauty and grace above everything.

The balance of happiness must have weighed heavily on the side of Sam's outside menage, with his three sons and the faithful Amalia. But in 1865 a fine son, Joshua Samuel, arrived to comfort Rachel, and in 1868, while the family was sojourning for a while in Hamburg, a little black-eyed daughter, Rebecca Rosalie was born. "My little guava-berry," her father affectionately

called her.

amuel's interests were as much in Europe as in the New World. He spent a great deal of his time abroad attending to his affairs. So when in 1872 the double domestic situation became acute, he entrusted the Panama business to the care of his nephews Josh Lindo and Josh Piza, and took Rachel and the children over to Paris to live. This would surely have cleared up a quite impossible tangle, only unfortunately, he also brought along the other woman's children to be educated. To Rachel they were most unwelcome, and she made no effort to hide her very natural feelings. She did not now consider herself bound by her agreement to receive them: for had not Sam quite flagrantly repudiated his side of the bargain when he failed to give up their mother? He prided himself on treating all his children impartially; but to poor Rachel this fairness seemed most unfair. The best medical care, and unstinted means were devoted to the alleviation of Annie's condition. Later she was sent to New York for treatment, and she was for some years a member of the Piza's household. But she always remained a cripple.

hile the Samuel Pizas were living in Paris, and traveling about Europe, they discovered a family



of Pizas in London. The father the Reverend David Piza was Hazan of the old Bevis Marks Synagogue, and the son Judah was secretary. The given names of this family repeated the names of old Joshua



Piza's children
dren - David,
and Judah.
could not quite
lationship, these
first names
of a near common
they regarded
cousins. The
daughter Rachel
and stay with
for nothing de



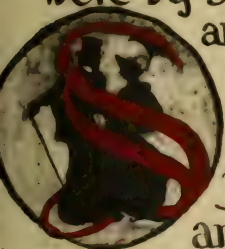
and grand-child
Rachel, Rebecca
Though they
trace their re-
traditional
convinced them
ancestry, and
each other as
unmarried
used to come
them in Paris-
lighted **S**ampi

more than to play fairy godfather to those less fortunate than himself. When the Paris family visited London, they enjoyed the lavish hospitality of the boarding house that Mrs David Piza ran. Though they were not in good circumstances these London Pizas bore the marks of aristocratic breeding: indeed the son Judah was frequently mistaken for Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. Mrs Piza presided like a duchess over a platter of beautifully fried sole-cooked by herself-and the most distinguished Jews, such as Sir Moses Montefiore and Sir Samuel Sassoon would stay at their house for the holidays to be near the synagogue.



In 1878 Rachel paid a visit to New York with her children. Tossy celebrated his thirteenth birthday there and a fine affair was given at their home on East Thirty-third Street to do honor to his *bar mitsvah*. His father came on to be with them for the occasion. They returned to Paris some months later, but in a few years Rachel and the children settled in New York for good. Her brother David and two of her three sisters were living there. She bought a house on West Forty-fifth Street and took the two unmarried sisters Bienvenida and Hannah to live with them. Florence Lindo, whose parents did not

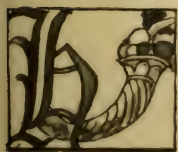
come to New York until 1885, joined the household for a time, — and that was the beginning of an admiration between her and Jossy that resulted in their marriage years later. Including the servants and Mrs. Kingsley, Annie's kind attendant, they were a large and feminine household. On the buffalo-horn hatrack in the hall a silk hat (seldom dusted) was kept, to show the sneak, who might enter with harmful intent, that they were not without masculine protection. They lived well: Rosalie went to finishing school, and Jossy, after he had finished his education abroad, kept horses. Both these young people adored their handsome father, whose charm and generosity were realized by them as they were by strangers.



Samuel continued to travel about a great deal. He was likely to appear at any moment in Panama, Costa Rica, Hamburg or London. In 1882 he was in San Francisco,

and he escorted his niece Hannah Delvalle, Archie's daughter, to her first ball. He made himself thoroughly at home in any house that he graced with his presence. Once while visiting acquaintances, he chanced to sit on a chair that creaked ominously under him. Now **S**am had kept his

youthful slenderness, and he did not like that sound; so he looked at the chair in rather a hurt manner. Then he examined the workmanship and found it strong. "I'll fix it!" he cried, "just get me some sweet oil." he lubricated the jarring parts, and the chair was thereafter decently silent. How his hosts enjoyed the easy friendliness of this traveled man-of-the-world who was their guest! And he always seemed to be enjoying himself so much. Each of his nieces knew that she could count on her generous uncle for a check of five hundred dollars when she married.



He died of heart-disease in the year '85, when he was fifty-eight. he provided for Benja and Julio in his will by leaving them the Costa Rica business and the coffee plantation. Alberto had died when only sixteen. Amalia, too, had predeceased him by many many years. The residue of his fortune went to his wife and children.



In 1890, greatly to the delight of her pious mother, Rosalie married the Reverend J. Pereira Mendes, minister of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation in New York, and a descendant of one of the oldest families of Sephardic Jews. Joshua married

his cousin Florence Lindo in 1894.

y a coincidence, Rachel died in the same city as her husband, Paris, and of the same illness, heart trouble, seven years later.





HAIM PIZA

JUDA PIZA m1823 LUNA AHUBI

MOZES PIZA m1863 SARA PALACHI

Joshua Piza m1816 Hannah Sasso

1772 - 1850

1800 - 1890

7 SARAH m1847 HERMAN MEYER

1829 - 1907

1820 - 1895

MORITZ m SOPHIE REIMERS

EVELYN m HERMAN WOLFF

1848

ERWIN
d.

EDGAR
m

FRANCES
m
VÖLTING

1901
d.

1912
s

SIDNEY
m

Anna Marie
m

Descendants of Joshua Piza's Seventh Child.

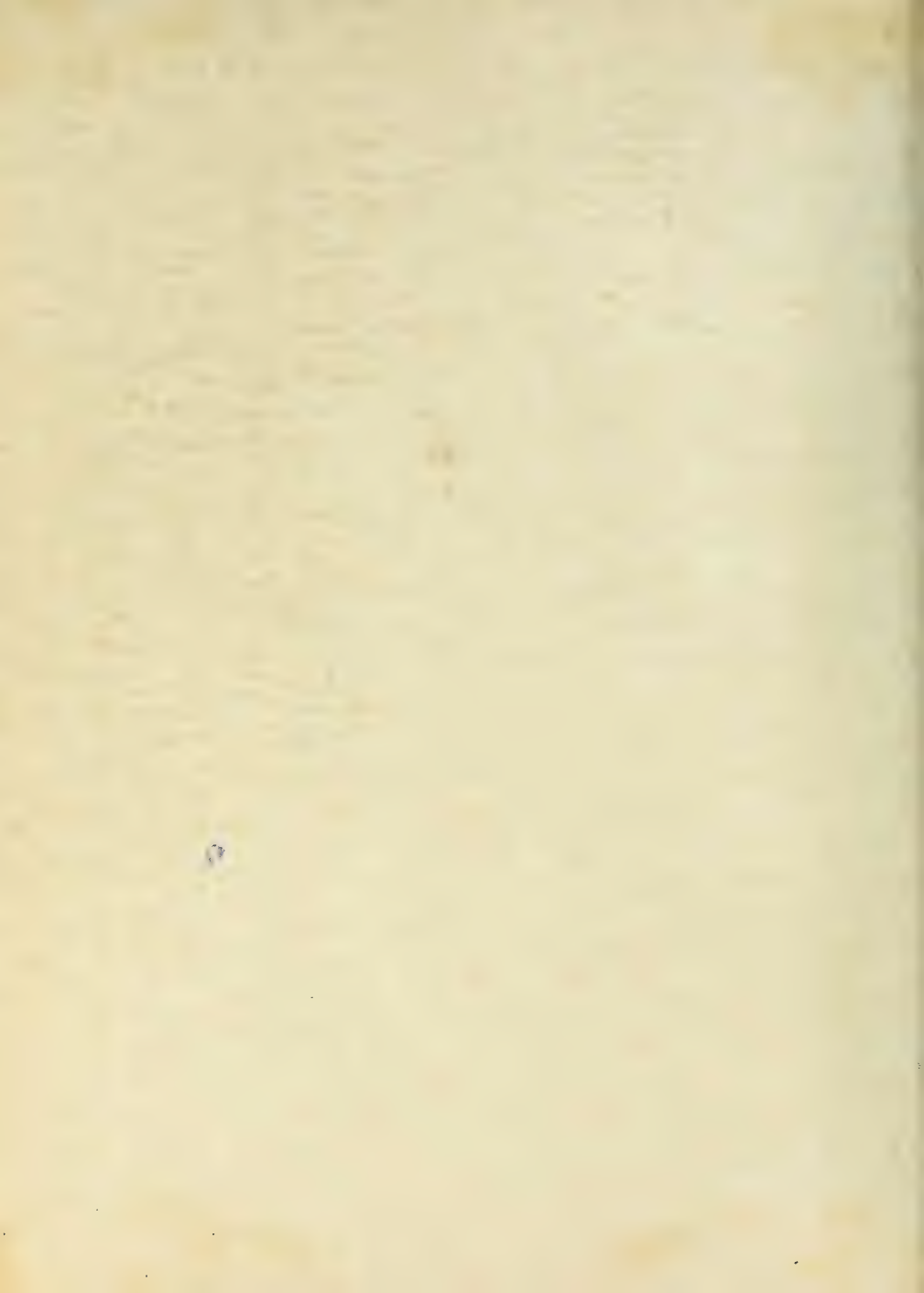


One of the more successful of the

younger business men of St Thomas was **Herman Meyer** who had come there from Hamburg and was prominent as an importer. A prosperous bachelor of twenty-seven, he was considered by mothers a particularly desirable catch for their daughters.

Hannah Piza was as usual busy in her store one morning, when a woman friend came in - possibly to buy something, but surely to gossip. The talk ran on a ball that had taken place the night before. The lady simpered and looked mysterious, but finally confessed that **Mr. Meyer** had been so attentive to her daughter at the affair that she was sure they were engaged. Of course the hopeful mother was in high glee. Having told her story, she bustled out to spread it further.

He next visitor to the shop was **Herman Meyer** himself. The successful young merchant was a good friend of the energetic shopkeeper, and was in the habit of dropping in frequently to chat with her. They talked of this and that - of ships



due and reports of hurricane, of news of the war between Mexico and the United States. Then **H**annah told him of the rumor she had heard of his engagement; and she asked if she might congratulate him. The young **H**amburger's face was a study.

Mrs. **P**iza, he said earnestly, "when I am engaged you will be the first to know it!"



It was only a short time after that he proposed to **SARAH PIZA**, tall and pretty. He had seen her first a

couple of years before at the wedding of his friend **J**ack **L**indo to her sister

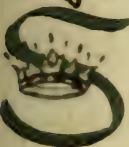
Benvenida. Ever since that evening he had been attracted to **S**arah, but he was a deliberate chap and just then very much occupied in making a success of his business; besides **S**arah was young. She accepted **H**erman.

A little difficulty was experienced with old **J**oshua, the ex-minister: for he did not feel that any *Tedesco*-no matter how wealthy-was good enough for his daughter, of proud Spanish, (or was it Portugese?) blood. **H**annah always treated her husband kindly: indeed many people openly criticized her for sitting out the dependent old man in the neat black satin knee-breeches, silk stockings and silver buckles that he loved. However, when it came to really practical matters-- such as an advantageous marriage for their child

she did not allow his aristocratic ideals of family to stand in the way. We find this record in the synagogue archives:

*Sarah Piza married Herman Meyer 12 May 1847
(Sarah, daughter of Joshua and Hannah Piza,
Herman, son of Meiss and Frederica Meyer, born Levy)*

The fruit of this marriage was two children, Evelyn and Moritz, both born in St Thomas. By the time the boy was seven Herman had done so well in his affairs that he decided to leave the island and take his little family to make Hamburg their home. His business he confided to the care of Ben and Aaron Luria, who had long been in his employ. In Hamburg he established the household in style.

arah responded to her dignified position. She kept a handsome well run house and was extremely aristocratic in her manner. She required her servants to address her as if she were Royalty. Indeed, to Royalty itself she granted no superiority: for once it happened that her family was taking a holiday at Pyrmont, a fashionable resort, and as was their custom, they had the finest suite that the hotel provided. The proprietor came to her in distress, for he had just received word that the Princess of Waldeck

was arriving. He humbly begged the *gnädige Frau* to take some other quite good rooms that he would prepare, so that he might give of his best to the Princess. Sarah haughtily refused to change. And that was all there was to it!



Socially the Meyers mingled with a wealthy Christian set. Their name did not label them as Jews and Herman did not advertise his antecedents. But Sarah, who had been strictly brought up in religious observance, was sorely troubled. She saw the prejudice with which Jews were generally regarded in Germany - she could not herself help feeling it toward those loud people who she saw were the cause of this scorn. She was torn between race loyalty and social pride, and in the conflict between these emotions she became decidedly neurotic. Her relatives in St Thomas felt that she was putting on airs. They criticised her motives. When she kindly offered to take one of the children of her sister Benvenida, (poor as the proverbial church-mouse) to live with her and educate, the intimated that she and "Uncle Meyer" selected Alfred because his name had no Hebraic association as did "Joshua" or "Samuel". Whatever the cause, it was Alfred Lindo who lived in her household from the time he was seven until he was eighteen.



he daughter Evelyn, and the son Moritz, were unusually handsome children and their parents took a consuming pride in them.

Evy became a great belle; her fair beauty, supplimented by intelligence and animated wit made her the much sought companion of Gracs and Harons.

For that day and age she was quite daring, too: her arm being extravagantly admired by one of her beaux, she responded with, "Ah, but that is *nothing* compared to my leg!"



er Jewish origin was never suspected. But the beauty was so sure of herself that on one occasion she boasted to her noble companion of her antecedants. So confident was she that her magnetic personality could sweep aside all prejudice. Alas - she did not realize the depth of this prejudice: at the next ball she was neglected, positively deserted. Gradually the ostracism wore off, but she never again attempted to exercise her broadening influence on the bigot.

oritz was equally popular, and strikingly good-looking: it is said that when he, an aristocratic blond, and his dark

romantic looking cousin Julius Sasso walked down the Alsterstrasse together, there was a general craning of necks among the ladies

When she was eighteen, Evy married Herman Wolff, a man twenty years her senior and (rather surprisingly, considering all Evy's gentile associations) the son of orthodox Jewish parents. His brother was a famous physician in Hamburg.

to move in Evy's popularity and reputation endured. described as the handsomest woman in Hamburg. did not neglect her Hebrew connections while she lived as she drove with her aristocratic friends, saying, 'That is my tailor,' or 'Just my dressmaker.'



They continued Society, and for beauty She was often as 'the hand-woman in while she 'cut' her conventional appearance, explain them nodded casually with her aristocratic



Ortiz felt in love with a Jewish girl, but she rejected him. It is said that he then became embittered against the race. At any rate, he later completely lost his heart to Sophie Reimers, a Christian girl of great beauty. Her mother, like his,

was from St. Thomas. Sophie's father rigorously opposed the match on account of the suitor's Semitic origin; but the girl adored Moritz, and answered her father's bigotry with the statement that she believed she believed she herself had Jewish blood, as the name of her mother's father, a Dane, was "Goldmann" - typically Hebraic. They married, and this is the first recorded instance of any of the Piza descendants marrying out of the faith. It caused much hard feeling in Moritz's less immediate family. Since that time intermarriage has occurred with increasing frequency.



☆†☆ ☆†☆ ☆†☆ ☆†☆
Guy Wolff's only son Sidney grew up and studied medicine. At twenty-seven he was already established at the university as a professor, and highly esteemed. Then the relatives across the Atlantic were shocked to learn that not only was he to marry a Christian girl high in the social scale - the daughter of the Burgomaster of Strassburg - but also that before the wedding he was himself to be baptised. When the young professor died only four months after his marriage, of course these pious relatives recognized it as a punishment from On High, especially as it was rumored that at the root of his illness lay a poisonous oyster.



Being lonely after the marriage of their children, Sarah and Herman sought to take another of her young relatives to live with them: they invited Delia Delvalle, the daughter of Sarah's youngest sister Achie. The parents, fearful of the gentile influence, would not hear of it. However the Meyers bore no illwill on account of the refusal of their offer, for when members of that family were in Hamburg, they received them warmly. Attractive young Hannah - next after Delia in the list of the thirteen Delvalle children - was delighted when her wealthy aunt and uncle offered her a dress made to order by one of the most fashionable dressmakers. But the Piza family could not refrain from a sly laugh at the 'German closeness' which made it a matter of principle for rich Uncle Meyer to insist that the modiste shade down the bill after the gown was delivered.



In the last years of Sarah's unresourceful life were rather sad and lonely. Her mind was not deep, nor her interests varied. When Meyer died at the age of seventy-five in 1895, she continued living alone in the big house that was almost a castle, overlooking the Alster. In this establishment she inhabited only one room. Her greatest enjoyment to dismiss for the day her personal maid

and to cook on a little stove for herself, dishes that recalled her youth in St Thomas. She could no longer glory in Evelyn's triumphs as a reigning beauty, for with the passage of time her famous charms had dimmed. It is said that her heart broke when Ernest Luria, her cousin brought out from Venezuela Anita de Sola, his breath-takingly lovely bride. She realized that a new queen had come to reign in her realm, and unwilling to take second place, Evy went into retirement. She never forgave her daughter-in-law for remarrying after four years of widowhood. Sarah outlived her husband by twelve years. Her sister Rebecca also resided in Hamburg, and she and her family were among her very few visitors. How different were these two sisters, the elder, socially ambitious, vain and self-centered; the younger, a worker, unselfish, devoted: both, however handsome and dignified. In 1907, after a year suffering from intestinal cancer, Sarah died.





ESTHER

1831 - 1917





HAIM PIZA

JUDA PIZA m1723 LUNA AHUBI

MOZES PIZA m1763 SARA PALACHI

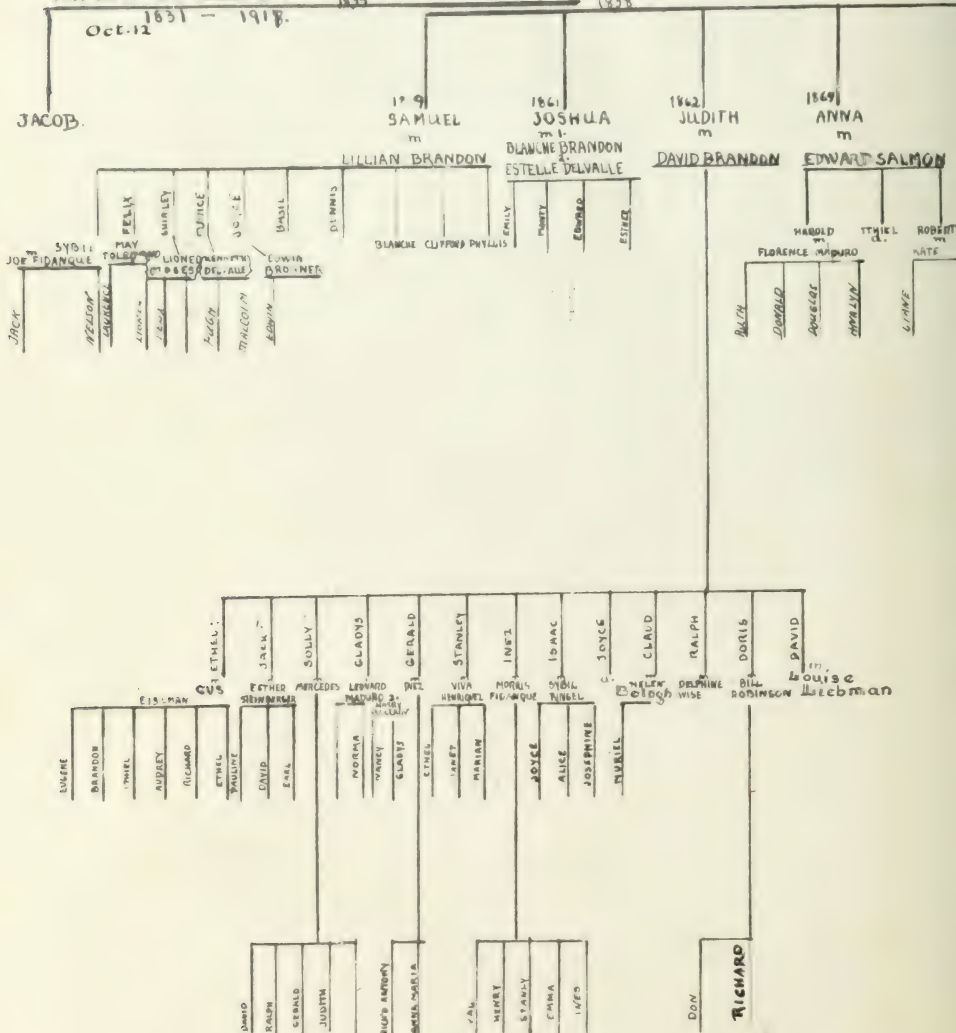
Joshua Piza m1816 Hannah Sasso

1712 1859

1800 - 1880

VIII ESTHER PIZA m HMBELISARIO 2 m SOLOMON

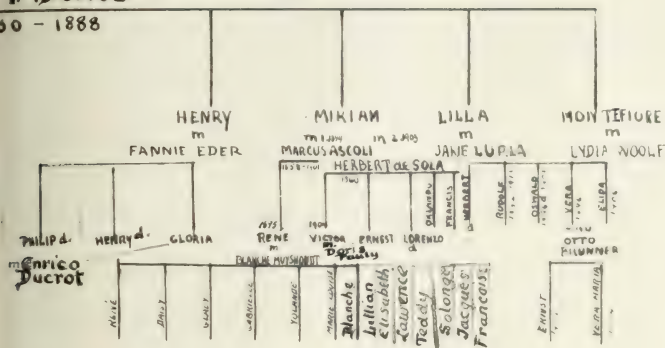
Oct. 12 1831 - 1918.



Descendants of Joshua Piza's

MADURO

1830 - 1888



Eighth Child

68b.



From the time of the marriage

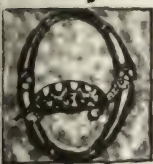
of Joshua and Hannah in 1816

until twenty-one years later, there was seldom an interval of more than two years of their lives that was not punctuated by the birth of a baby. Their sixth child, **ESTHER** arrived just two years and one week after her sister Sarah.



Like the rest of the **Piza** girls, she grew to be tall and handsome, but in that family of vivacious young women, she was notable for her calm, even, undemonstrative temperament. As she matured she had many admirers, and, as had been the case with Judith, most were among the Christian set. There was an attractive Cuban captain, but because of their different faiths, she sent him on his way. There was also a Danish officer, Sonderberg, - and he declared himself astonished that she could be so narrow as to refuse him on account of his religion. **Esther's** cool well behaved heart never led her to do

anything that her sensible, clear-thinking head did not advise. her parents never felt any cause to worry on her account. And she was not without charm for her own set: young Solomon Naduro, a youth about her own age was desperately in love with her, but he did not especially appeal to her. † † † † †



One evening, about two years after old Joshua's death, the family sat at table finishing the evening meal. The widow, in her black lace cap, presided at the head; while at the foot sat her son Jacob home on one of his occasional visits from Panama. Along the sides of the board - which had formerly stretched to a considerable length - were disposed only the four girls, Esther, 21, Rebecca, 19, Leah, 17, and Rachel, 15; for the two step-sons and the three eldest daughters were married and had their own homes, while Samuel was now, as almost always, away on business. However those present formed an eager audience for whatever the eldest son of the house might say. Between bites of a juicy mango he was relating the events of the day. He mentioned that one Belisario, a particularly reserved English gentleman, had called on him at his office and surprised Jacob by his cordiality and the earnest request that he visit him. Coco had been so taken aback by the unexpectedness of the invitation that he had almost

forgotten his manners and failed to return him the compliment. But he had run after Belisario to invite him to call at the Piza household.



scarcely had he finished repeating the incident, and listened to the wondering comments of his mother and sisters that a man known to be so coldly distant as that English salesman should have sought him out, when there was a ring at the doorbell and there stood Henry Mendes Belisario. He had followed close on the heels of the enforced invitation.



Perhaps Esther was not as surprised as the others were, for at synagogue the preceding sabbath, seated between her sisters Judith and Sarah, Esther had felt the eyes of this stranger focussed on her all through the service. Her embarrassment was not relieved by the whispered comments of the young matrons: "That man is surely in love with you, my dear!" "I never saw a man show so plainly he was in love!"



he young matrons were right, and it did not take the Englishman long to declare himself. He had chanced to hear her voice when he first arrived in St Thomas as he was strolling behind her while she conversed with a friend. Though he could not see her face, he had fallen in love with her soft melodious voice and gentle dignified bearing.

Inquiring, he easily found out that she was Esther Piza and he had taken the opportunity of seeing her at the Saturday morning service. Esther accepted her suitor and they were married on the Eighteenth of August, 1852.

Belisario's business took him to Baltimore and the bride accompanied her aristocratic husband. There was an interesting story about the origin of his beautiful name. In early days one of his ancestors had been attached to the Spanish Court. An opera called "Belisario" was to be given before the king, when the principal singer fell ill. The young Jew offered to take the rôle, and filled it with such distinction that the king gave him a coat-of-arms, and the name Belisario. Henry's family was connected by blood with the best Jewish houses in England. He was related to Grace Aguilar. In due time news came back to St Thomas that a son was born, and that they had called him Jacob after his father and her brother. Then came more news, bad news. Belisario was dead. Coco made the trip and brought home his sister and her infant to to his mother's house. Henry had not left his widow provided for; he was only a salesman, and with his death his income ceased. She returned to live with her dependent mother. Meanwhile there was a constant stir of life in the active Piza clan. Something was

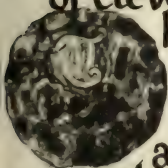
always going on in the way of births or weddings. In the four years after Esther became a widow, her two younger sisters, Rebecca and Leah, were married, and Esther herself, doubly interesting as an experienced young widow, began to be recognised as eligible. With an amused smile at his name which suggested to her the infernal regions, she dismissed Mr Hellman, a German. But her old admirer, Solomon Maduro, son of Hazan S. L. Maduro, began to be persistent. Esther did not want to marry this young clerk, her marital happiness had been brief, and she had suffered tortures in nursing her baby. She was content to stay in her mother's house; her unemotional nature did not demand more. But her mother did! Hannah spoke often on the subject of marriage. She argued with her placid daughter, and held up the spectre of lifelong dependence on her brothers and married sisters as the alternative to settling down with this worthy young man. The battle was waged for a long time, and as was generally the case the Patriarch won. On September first, 1858, Esther Piza Belisario became the wife of her suitor, faithful for so many years, at a ceremony performed by the groom's father, the Reverend S. L. Maduro. ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ they began life together with very small means. Esther's calm even temper and



philosophical outlook saw them placidly through the adjustments incident to the second marriage. Children came fast. Samuel born in 1859 was named after **S**olomon's father, the minister. Joshua, who arrived in 1861, was called so for **E**sther's reverend parent. He was followed by Judith in 1863, (named after her paternal grandmother), and Anna in 1865, slightly modifying the name of the maternal grandmother. It was a constant struggle to keep the growing family comfortable.



ut Jakie Belisario had an aunt in London, wealthy and childless, who had long besought **E**sther to give her her brother's child to bring up. She could do so much more for the boy than his mother and stepfather could. Sadly, for the welfare of her son, **E**sther acquiesced, and Jakie, a lad of eleven, was taken to London.



he necessity for more money finally led **S**olomon to venture into business for himself; and soon he began to make a good living. More children came, until their offspring numbered eight. Henry, born in 1867 was, surprisingly named after his wife's first husband. Miriam arrived eighteen months later, ^{then Lilla} and when their youngest was born in 1873, **E**sther called him Montefiore,



after Sir Moses Montefiore, for whose character and career she had a tremendous admiration. (She declared that had it not been for the great philanthropist, Queen Victoria would not have been born in England, and so could never have reigned as queen.)   



he business prospered, and **E**sther went with **S**olomon on a trip to the States. We remember this visit for it was on this occasion (1862) in Philadelphia that the Maduro and Brandon families met for the first time. While **E**sther sat talking to Mrs Jacob Brandon, whose seven-year-old son David was playing about the room, **E**sther was carrying unborn, the little daughter Judith, who would seventeen years later, marry him.         



When Sam and Josh they were to receive a thotion. With them boy Sam Lindo, age. The lads the David Lardos, cle Ben Luria on them. By years **S**olomon business was



was twelve was eleven, sent to Hamburg rough educa- went Ben vanida's about the same boarded with but their un- kept an eye the end of four **M**aduro's showing de-

finite signs of reverse, and the students were sent for. Not only was the expense of their board and schooling more than could be spared from a large and hungry family, but their actual help was needed. The lads must go to work. **S**olomon taught them book-keeping and methods. Then his store failed, and the unhappy man, weighed down by his debts, collapsed in health and spirit. But the boys took hold at once: Josh went to Costa Rica as clerk to his uncle Elias Maduro; while young Sam, at seventeen, departed for Panama to enter business on his own account. He was entrusted by his father with merchandise stock from his ruined business amounting to four thousand dollars.



Esther remained at home and did what she could to help the family exchequer. A "droga-bowl" or "tray" was the solution in those days when the young lady who worked away from her own home was unknown. This was a method of selling wares that had been taken up by several of the more enterprising women of St Thomas. They imported from abroad small articles, such as fine scented soaps, perfumes, laces, ribbons and braids and the jeweled hair nets that were so much the vogue. They sent out pleasant negro women, crisply dressed, wearing gay bandanas. On their heads they carried wide wooden vessels

much on the style of chopping-bowls, heaped up with the fineries. Announced by the cry "Droga-bowl going by!" they went from house to house with their wares, selling their luxuries among the wealthier classes. Esther had three or four of these 'sellers' working for her. Some of them developed qualities of real salesmanship; so she eked out enough to carry them through the darkest of their days.



But her clear eye saw no future for their family in St Thomas, and she pleaded with her husband to leave. Let them all go to Panama where Sam for six months had been struggling to make a success of his venture. But confidence seemed to have deserted the unhappy Solomon; he could not bear to think of starting anew in a strange country at his age, (he was forty-seven.) "How can I leave my beautiful St Thomas?" he faltered. "And will the beauty feed us all?" his practical wife inquired. As he could not summon the resolution to move, Esther gathered up her six children and departed for Panama, to make a home for Sam. The lad was working valiently, and soon became the mainstay of the family. His mother had saved a little from the "droga bowl" undertaking and this she invested in her boy's store. As a business-woman her judgment was clear and far sighted, and the lad found her advice well worth taking.

In six months **S**olomon joined them and their business became known as "Maduro e Hijos" (Maduro and Sons), for Josh had left his position in San José, and joined them in the store. 8 8 8



Young Sam was virtually the head of his mother's household. It was he who punished the younger children and made rules for their behavior; for **S**olomon

was soft and easy going. Children's conversation was not permitted at meals: they must sit just so. (Except little Monty who always did exactly as he pleased about everything). **E**sther brought them up to be industrious and economical. Her lack of imagination in training them is illustrated by an incident which occurred when the girls were small: before she went out one day she set Budu and Anna to work helping Cookie to make a prune pudding. Her parting injunction was, "Don't put prune seeds in your nose!" Days later attention was called to little Anna by a stubborn snuffle which did not yield to the ordinary treatment for cold. The child suffered with catarrh for months, and then she began to be troubled with intense headaches. When a new physician was consulted, he found that a prune-pit had been shoved up her little nose and was sprouting. With the removal of the cause, the illness disappeared. 8 8 8 8 8

Solomon died at the age of fifty-seven.

Maduro e Hijos had paid many of the debts incurred by his fall in St Thomas. But on his deathbed **S**olomon made Sam promise not to leave one creditor unsatisfied. It was customary, in the case of a failure, to make an arrangement for the settlement of debts, but Sam would accept no compromise, and paid one hundred cents on every dollar owed. —



The younger boys, Henry and the handsome Monty were given the good education that Sam and Josh had to forgo. They studied in London and in New York. It was in New York that Monty later studied and practised medicine. Henry entered the family business and successfully managed the retail end. —



Jacob Belisario, the half-brother adopted by his wealthy aunt, had met with a sad fate. Always a retiring artistic lad, he had kept in touch with his mother by letter and her occasional visits to England to see him. Just after his schooling was completed he paid his first visit to his family in St Thomas. Mrs. Raphael, his foster mother had died and made Jackie her heir. He arranged that on his return to England from his trip, he would invest his money in land and live the life of a gentleman farmer. But on this visit to his mother's house he behaved strangely - imagined himself watched and the victim of persecution. Soon he

became so violently insane that he had to be taken to an asylum. He lived for ten years but never recovered his mental health. When he died in a Philadelphia *maison de santé* his mother inherited \$25,000 that remained from the fortune left him by his aunt. This money was expended mainly on Monty's expensive medical education, European trip and elaborate office equipment.     

ther's later years were placid and comfortable. Her eight children all married. The conscientious Samuel would not form any alliance until he saw his sisters cared for, and his mother established at ease. At the age of thirty-three, he married Lilian Brandon. Josh had married her sister Blanche three years before; but she had died at the birth of their baby. Judith, when not quite seventeen, had married David Brandon; she in time found herself the aunt-in-law of her two older brothers! Lilla Maduro at nineteen had wedded her cousin Jacob Luria. Anna had married Edward L. Salmon who was twenty-one years her senior. Miriam was twice wed; first to Marcus Ascoli, a middle-aged Frenchman who died shortly after their son René was born; then practically duplicating her mother's experience of double matrimony, wedding her first admirer, who in this case was Herbert de Sola. Monty, Dr

Maduro united with Lydia Wolf in 1900. After eighteen years of widowhood Josh again took a mate: he chose Estelle Delvalle, the girl who as an infant had been adopted by her childless aunt. Henry married in New York Fanny Eder, whose father had pioneered in Colombia. Esther's grandchildren, scattered over the earth, numbered more than three dozen.



Interrupting its even tenor only by an occasional trip abroad, Esther lived out her comfortable old age in Panama. She continued to be a partner in her sons' business and was consulted on all matters of policy. A branch store, selling men's clothings and furnishings, was about to be opened in New York; when Esther discovered it was to operate on the Sabbath, she refused to have anything to do with the enterprise. The venture was not a success; and she undoubtedly saved herself much worry by her decision. Desirous that the young people of the Panama community should know something of their religion, she organised and financed a Sabbath School which was led by her brother-in-law, Jacob Maduro.



In the big rambling house above Maduro e hijos' store the placid widow lived, devotedly cared for by her daughter Anna, who had returned with her three boys

to the maternal roof after the death of her husband. They kept open house, and sumptuous meals were served there. Early guests would always find their hostess ready, rocking calmly in her favorite chair on the balcony-sitting-room that looked out on the courtyard; her agile fingers were usually engaged in the cross-stitch embroidery with which she showered her relatives. (What household of the family is without a "God Bless Our Home" done by her hand?) While her sister Benvanida Lindo had cared to read only newspapers and current events, Esther Maduro, otherwise practical and matter-of-fact, revelled in romantic novels.



he died in 1918 in her eighty-eighth year of life, and in the full possession of all her faculties. She was the longest-lived of her long-lived generation.





HAIM PIZA

JUDA PIZA m 1723 LUNA AHUBI

MOZES PIZA m 1763 SARA PALACHI

Joshua Piza married 1816

1772 - 1850

IX. REBECCA m 1857 **AARON LURIA**

Jan 22, 1835 - 1911

1838

ANNA

Mar-
cus
JAFJE

1861 1911

ESSIE

AUGUST ASCHER

1873

JOSEPH

X. LEAH

1835 - 1866

1871 1888

JOSEPH

1878 1896

ALBERT

ANITA OTTO FELIX MINNIE

RUDOLPH

EVA

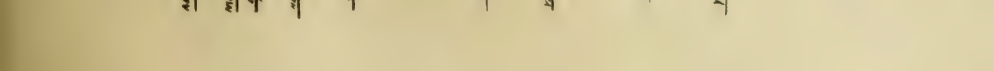
EDITH MICHAELS

THOMAS

Descendants of Joshua Piza's

1880

1830 + 1895



82c.



The lives of the sisters Rebecca

Leah the ninth and tenth children of Joshua Tiza, are so interwoven and dependent on each other, that it seems as if the only way to tell their stories, is to treat them together in one chapter. For, were it not for **Leah**, **Rebecca** might never have married; were it not for **Rebecca**, **Leah's** children might have been half-orphans; were it not for — but that is rushing ahead: let us first speak of **Rebecca**.



When she was eighteen, **Rebecca** was deeply fascinated by an attractive young man from Curaçao. The visitor was **Elias de Sola**; he constantly sought her out, lent her books, and showed great delight in her company. He was so extremely attentive, that **Rebecca** and all the watchful neighbors were led to believe that he was in love with her and would ask her to marry him. But before

he had made any declaration, he was sent for by his aristocratic father, proud of the deSola descent from one of the oldest Jewish families, in Spain. Perhaps this practical man had heard of ^{his} son's affection for an undowered young woman - the daughter of a minister without a congregation; but perhaps he did *not* know that her grandfather Mozes Piza was famous in Holland as a writer of Jewish poems and hymns, or that her great-grandfather Juda Piza was well known during the middle of the Eighteenth Century as preacher, publisher and poet. If he had known these things possibly he would not have been so eager to remove the young man. Elias left St Thomas. Poor Rebecca broke down from disappointment and shame. Not only to have the bitterness of finding the man she loved to be so spineless, but also to have to bear the pity of those who saw it too! She became melancholy, ill. For a year she hardly left her bed. It so happened that her youngest sister Achy had also had an unfortunate love affair, so these two girls became partners in mysogamy and made a compact never to marry. But when her retirement was lasting too long Rebecca's family forced her to face life again; but she was found by all to be greatly altered. She was quieter, self effacing - her old verve gone. Even her features had lost their former delicacy - her nose its fineness.

Leah was almost three years younger than Rebecca. Just before she was twenty-one, she married Benjamin Luria of Hamburg who was five years her senior, a trusted employee in the successful firm of Herman Meyer, her brother-in law. A homely



fellow was Ben, with a club foot. Leah joined with the other young girls in making fun of him, but secretly she found his ugliness fascinating, and admired his true goodness and stability of character. Her choice proved wise for he made her an excellent husband.

They had not been married very long when Ben's brother Aaron Luria paid them a visit of some days as he was passing through St Thomas on his way to Maricaoibo, Venezuela, where he was a partner in the prominent firm of Blohm and Company. "Ah," thought the matchmakers of



St Thomas, "that would be a good chance for the elder, unmarried sister!" But Rebecca, although it was five years since her unhappy love affair, avoided meeting Aaron. As long as he was in town she visited no house where he might by any chance be. She kept away from Leah and Ben's until she heard the visitor had gone on board his ship. However, the evening of the day he had embarked, she went to dine with them. In the middle of the meal there was a flurry of excitement. Aaron, considered safely disposed of on a sailing-vessel, had returned. The wind was unfavorable, and his ship could not leave the harbor. Rebecca, cold and embarrassed, was unable to avoid being introduced. And Aaron promptly fell in love with her.



nce more it was the task of the mother Hannah Piza to induce an unwilling child to marry a worthy man. It was almost a habit now and her arguments easily; She had coaxed so many of her daughters, and always - with one sad exception - with the happiest of results. At twenty-four years, Rebecca abjured her foolish vow and married Aaron Luria. She went with him to Venezuela, and there she lived quite happily and bore him three children, Anna, Essie and Joseph.



n 1865, Aaron died, and after eight years absence, his widow returned to her native isle, with her children. Financially she was

independent, as her husband had left her \$30,000.
In St Thomas, Ben and Leah had also been
raising a family. Joe, Albert, Ernest, Herman,
Jacob, Sissy and Anita were born there.

Then Benjamin Luria found himself in
the position that he could retire to Hamburg
where he could give his children the educa-
tional advantages of a large city. In doing this,
he was following the German tradition by which
the young men went pioneering to new countries,
made their fortunes and then returned to the
homeland to enjoy the fruits of their early labor
in company with the wives they had married
and the children that had been born to them
in the younger land. The business was left in
the hands of Ernest da Costa Meyer, a cousin
of Herman Meyer. Rebecca and her brood of
three accompanied the Ben Lurias and their
seven. There was no reason why the widow's chil-
dren should not also have the advantages of
European culture, and be brought up in the tra-
ditions of their father. The sisters had sepa-
rate households.



In his return to Hamburg, Ben was made a part-
ner in the local firm of H. Meyer and Com-
pany. Leah became a mother for the eighth
time in giving birth to Edward. But this
time she contracted puerperal fever. Before she
died, she begged her sister Rebecca to care
for the infant and to bring up her children.

Soon she was established in her brother-in-law's household as foster-mother to his children. Naturally the addition of four people crowded their quarters, so Rebecca had a wing built on to the house for her family. She was adored by her

nieces and whom was his mother ins grew A great them only son. a blow on was struck way home he was thir- was greatly her trouble



nephews, the eldest of only eleven when died; and the couple up as one big family. sorrow came to when Rebecca's Joseph died from the appendix. he by a boy on his from school when teen. His mother saddened, but bore bravely.

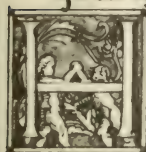
Her daughters Anna and Essie both married: Anna to Marcus Jaffe, and the sweet Essie to August Ascher. Of Ben's children

the eldest mentally he died was thirty-second did not his infant the third was thirty



Joseph was deficient; when he one. The son Albert, survive cy. When son Ernest he married

the beautiful Anita de Sola of Curacao, daughter of the faithless suitor of his Aunt Rebecca's girlhood. Herman who went into business in Panama as a young lad, married a native Candelaria Almuelles. The sprightly Sissy did not wed until she was forty; then she became the wife of Sigmund Mautner, an Austrian widower with two daughters. Sissy completed his family with a son. Jacob married his cousin Lilla Maduro of Panama. Anita united with Edgar Pinto, an Englishman. Edward, the youngest, died at the age of thirty-six. ~~CCCCC~~



Heart disease carried off the head of this big household. Ben Luria, when he was sixty-five, Rebecca, unselfish and devoted, remained as the gentle ruler of the Hamburg family until her death sixteen years later. She died in 1911, also of heart disease, at the age of seventy-eight.





RACHEL

1857 ~ 1916



MADE PIZA

JUDA PIZA m 1723 LUWA AMULSI

MOZES PIZA m 1763 SARA PALACHI

Joshua Piza m 1846 Hannah Sasso

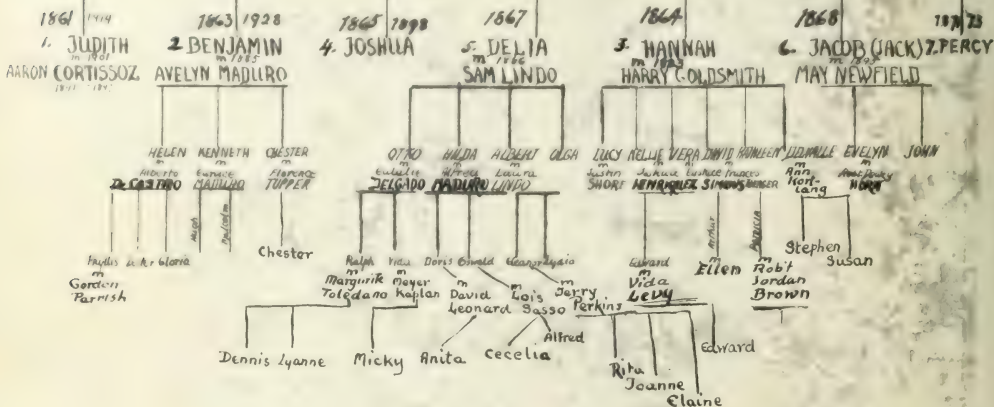
1772 - 1870

1802 - 1880

11. RACHEL m 1860 SOLOMON B.

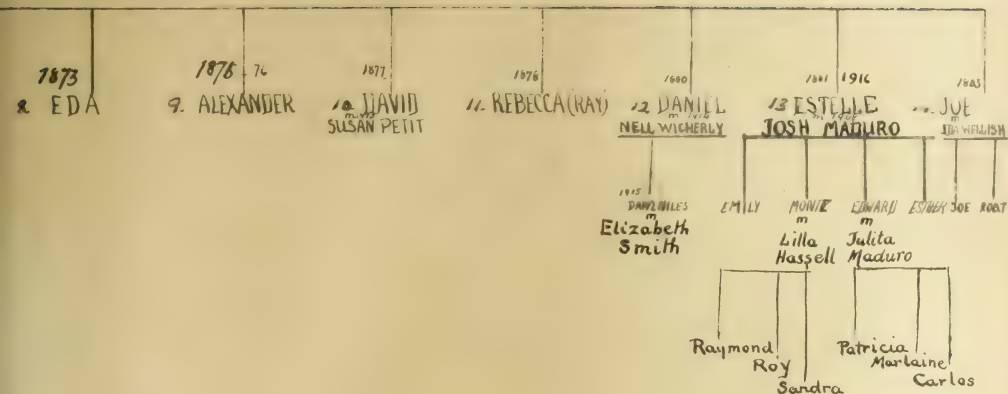
Dec. 15, 1837

1835 - 1882



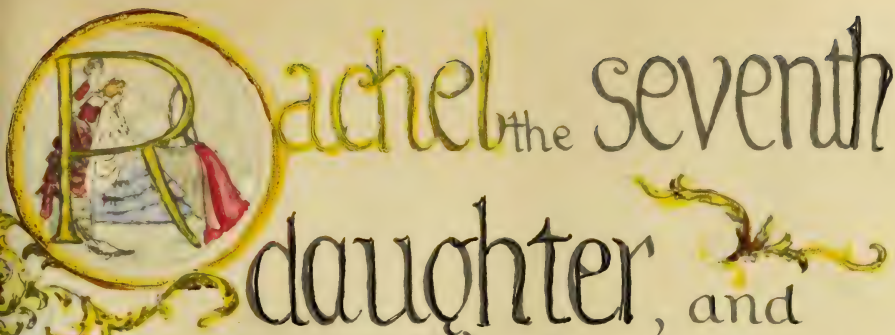
Descendants of Joshua Piza's

DELVALLE



Eleventh Child

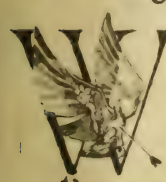


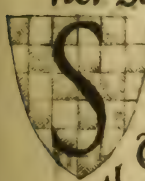


Rachel^{the} seventh daughter, and

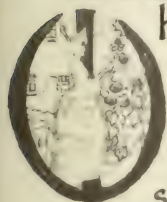
youngest child of the Joshua Pizars was born in 1837 when her father was in his sixtieth year. She was her mother's favorite child. As she grew up, she had neither the vivid beauty of Judith nor the delicate features of Sarah; but she had a pleasant agreeable face, a graceful carriage, and a disposition so obliging that she was loved by all. There was nothing that her capable fingers would not attempt, and nothing that they attempted that they did not do well. In those days of the elaborate coiffure, she could arrange hair with *chic*; and she could tie a bow with more elegance and coquetry than anyone else. If a ball was to be given in the evening "Achie" would be occupied from early afternoon in arranging the head-dresses of her friends, and up to the last moment would be busy adding the little touches to their costumes that would make them more fetching. She was equally successful with her own appearance. They had a quaint little custom in St Thomas, of borrowing from one another, personal accessories. The morning after a soiree, there would

be a steady stream of negro servants at the Piza household sent by their mistresses to tell Miss **A**chie that Miss **H**enriquiz, or Miss **U**sorio, so greatly admired the lace ruche - or the couronne of flowers - that she wore at the party, and she would like to borrow and copy it if Miss **A**chie could spare it. But the girl could seldom oblige, as by then her laces were smoothed out flat in her drawer, and the flowers untwined and put away. For, according to the whim of the moment, she draped her laces and arranged her wreaths for each occasion.

hen she was eighteen she fell in love with an Englishman, a brilliant young fellow who completely fascinated her. They became secretly engaged. One day she discovered that he boasted to his friends of his conquest and allowed them to spy on his love-making. She would see him no more: she joined her sister **R**ebecca in a vow never to marry.

omehow this vow did not seem to interfere with her popularity. She had the opportunity to marry any number of the young men of St Thomas, - eleven, to be exact. She rejected them kindly and invariably suggested to her suitor some other girl whom she said would make him happier: several of her friends married her rejected suitors. (But **H**annah **P**iza could not resist letting their mothers know that **R**achel had been their first choice). Among the young men that she refused were Julius Wolf, the son

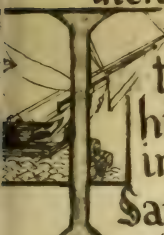
of Major Wolf who quelled the rebellion in Santa Cruz, and was decorated by King Christian for his bravery; Mordecai Maduro, known as "Massa", (the brother of Solomon who had married her sister Esther; a relative of her brother-in-law Herman Meyer, (who afterwards married a Miss Da Costa and called himself Da Costa Meyer). There were also a Mr Rosenbaum and a Mr Azevedo.



When she was twenty-three years old and still refusing all offers, Hannah got tired of it. She was not going to have it said that any of her daughters was left on the shelf. The suitor of the moment was Solomon Delvalle, of an excellent family, a solid young man two years Rachel's senior. He was considered so trustworthy and able that when he was only nineteen his employer, Mr Ozorio, sent him to England to buy for the firm. At twenty-five he had a splendid position. But Archie was still romantic about her first, unworthy, lover (who had turned out very badly indeed), and would not have him. Poor Solomon Delvalle was so broken by his rejection that his mother came to plead his cause. Hannah had it out with Archie, and on the threat of permanently withdrawing her love from her youngest if she persisted in refusing this excellent young man, finally prevailed on her to accept. Everyone said it was her mother that loved him. Rachel's oldest sister Judith, herself tragically mismated, openly encouraged the girl to please herself alone.

But **Achie** never had cause to regret her decision, for **Solomon** was a highly respected, honorable man, a loving husband and an excellent generous provider. ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

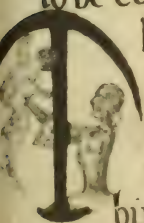
 They settled down in a home of their own and began raising the family which ended by being the largest of any of **Joshua Piza's** children. Their first child was a daughter, whom they called **Judith** after **Solomon's** mother; then came a son named **Benjamin** for his father; then a daughter **Hannah**, after the **Matriarch**.

 In 1865 the successful young **Solomon**, deciding to branch out in new countries, departed with his family for **Barranquilla, Colombia**. But in passing through **Panama** he was hailed by **Samuel Piza**, the important and prosperous merchant, ever on the lookout for promising young men to run his affairs for him. He and **Mordecai Maduro** were induced to stay in **Panama** as junior partners. In 1865 and '67 **Achie** gave birth to a son **Joshua** and a daughter **Delia**.

The business thrived and those wide-awake young men made plenty of money. They had the foresight to put in a huge supply of flour, which they were enabled during the scarcity to sell at the highest of prices to the whole **Spanish Main**, when none was being exported from the **United States**, then in the throes of reconstruction after the **Civil War**.

Old **Hannah** came to visit them in 1867. That

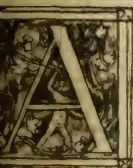
must have been a great event in her life, as it was the only time she had left St Thomas since she came there from Curaçao as a young woman of twenty-three. It was a fortunate time for her to be away, for that was the year of the worst earthquake and tidal wave in the history of St. Thomas, when all the inhabitants had to seek the hills to avoid drowning. **H**annah spent six months with **Achie** and **Solomon**. Then the **Delvalles** left, taking her with them. They stopped at Jamaica on the way back to St Thomas, for three months, while **Achie** was giving birth to a son **Jack**. While there **Solomon** was particularly attracted to a young lad of poor parents, **Nathaniel Brandon**, and although at that time he had six children of his own, he sent this boy to Europe for two years to be educated at the cost of a thousand dollars.



They returned to St Thomas and the **Delvalles** remained there for four years. Their seventh and eighth children **Percy** and **Eda** were born in the same place as the three eldest. Before her birth, **Eda** was promised as a gift to **Emily** and **Isaac Delvalle**, **Achie's** sister and brother-in-law, who were childless. In the fulness of her own prolific abundance, she pledged her unborn baby. But before the birth, her two year old son **Percy** died miserably, by choking to death on a bit of wood. The mother felt she had been punished for thinking of giving away anything so sacredly hers as a child. She disappointed **Emily** and **Eda** was reared by her own mother.

Solomon considered establishing himself in London;

so the next year he took over his family, and they were cordially received by Jacob and Bendita Piza, their brother and sister-in-law. The newcomers first stayed at the Hotel Alexander, which they liked so well that when their next son was born they named him Alexander. But **A**chie objected to the climate and could not accustom herself to the dark foggy weather, which frightened and depressed her. They had taken a house in the City to be near **S**olomon's office, and thus, living in the smoky town, instead of in the suburbs where most people resided, she felt she could not stand it. So they returned to St Thomas.  •  • 



All the children of old **H**annah were married and had gone to live in other countries. The old lady, now paralyzed, did not have one of her nine children near to cheer her declining years.

Rachel, ever the most devoted, declared she would not leave St Thomas again while her mother lived. So it was there that David, Rey and Daniel were born. The older children, who had resided for many years in larger cities, chafed at the confinement, and protested against the insularity of their surroundings; but their mother was adamant in her decision to remain there. She had recourse to "making a vow" - which was a habit of hers when determined not to be swayed from a serious purpose. As a girl she had made a vow not to accept the diamond heart her mother had broken the Sabbath to acquire, until a like amount had been given to charity; she had made a vow

in Panama not to buy lottery tickets, while all those around her were being demoralized by the lust for quick gain; and now she vowed that if her mother lived to be a hundred, she would not desert her. Solomon traveled to and fro as his business required; but Rachel and the children stayed near her old mother, who fortunately for youth (which must be served) lived only three years after their arrival.



he family moved back to Panama, where there was now a large colony of West Indian families enjoying the boom which began with the putting through of the French Canal. Estelle, the thirteenth child was born there. It does not seem surprising that after this heavy burden of child bearing, poor **A**chie almost collapsed. She was so weak and ill that she could not take care of her infant, which fell into the eager, loving hands of the childless Emily for succor. So it was that fate at last provided this child-hungry woman with an object for her maternal longings. For the frail and delicate mother was taken to California for a change of climate, and the infant left with Emily and Isaac Delvalle was never reclaimed.



he climate of San Francisco agreed with **R**achel and she got back her strength. She was enthusiastic about its equability, and soon after her arrival from the voyage which had been planned merely as a health trip, she announced to her husband: "This is

where I want to live!" And that is where they did live. She adored the brilliant sunshine, and she had a kind word even for the moist 'tule' fogs.

They were so different from the heavy 'pea-soup' variety that had driven them from London. A son Joe was born, fifteen months after Estelle.

But helpful as the climate was to Rachel, so was it harmful to Solomon. He was, all unknowing a victim of Bright's disease; for in the tropics it had remained dormant. The dampness of California soon made him worse, and he died in 1882 at the age of forty-seven.

The widow and her twelve surviving children were left comfortably off. The Panama business was thriving, and the eldest son, Benny, with his cousin Brandao Casseres managed it. Or should we say mis managed it? For soon there was a crash and the firm failed. The attention it should have received had been devoted to one of Panama's most beautiful matrons. Just before the bankruptcy, Josh Lindo, a nephew of Rachel's succeeded in transferring certain valuable properties to the children.

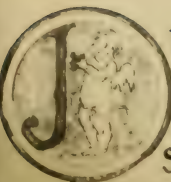
This act saved the family from complete ruin, and they could always count on a small income.

One house on the Main Street, valued at \$25,000 yielded \$500 a month in those prosperous days of the French Canal. But alas, this enterprise existed only from 1871-1884. Conquered by yellow fever and impoverished by the graft of a few men,

the visitors were forced to retire, leaving the graveyards full and their machinery rusting.

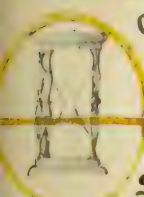
From that time until the Americans cleaned up the swamps, evicted the mosquito, and built the canal early in the new century, there were very quiet times in the business life of the Isthmus.

Most of Rachel's children married. Benny, his wild oats sown, married his second cousin, the pretty Avelyn Maduro. he never made a success of business; while he was an interesting talker, he was not very practical. It was only after he was past middle age that he began to get along moderately. The vivacious Hannah at nineteen married young Harry Goldsmith, whom she had met first as a child in London. When he came to Panama as a young man, they fell in love and soon wed. Their fortunes failed and Hannah proved herself unusually capable and resourceful. She was the admiration of all for the gallant spirit she showed. Delia married her cousin Sam Lindo, the handsomest of Benvenida's children. They spent most of their wedded life in Hamburg. *Achie* believed in marriage almost as fervently as her mother had: but it was her sons that she was most anxious about. In her later years she hesitated to have a victrola in the house, because she did not want her boys to be so content in their mother's house that they would not want to settle in homes of their own.

 Judith, the eldest daughter, was an attractive girl and popular. She often seemed on the verge of becoming engaged, and then surprised people by *not* doing so. When she was nearly forty, she entered into correspondence with Aaron Cortissoz of Philadelphia. His aged sister in San Francisco was her friend, and Judith used to sit with her and read, or write her letters for her. Often her correspondence was with Aaron. He, a bookbinder twenty years older than Judith and more than once a widower, was so attracted by her letters that without even seeing her he proposed marriage. Delighted as she was by his literary style and and fine sentiments, and enamoured by the romance of an unseen admirer, - still Judith hesitated. Finally she agreed to meet him in Chicago, and so that they recognise each other, sent him half of a rosette of ribbon to wear while she retained the other half. Determined ly she prepared to meet him, but - cautiously - she bought a return-ticket to San Francisco. (If she did not like him she would seem prepared - undisappointed - and ready for the trip back). But Cortissoz was sure of himself and came with the wedding ring in his pocket. They were married immediately, and lived quietly in Philadelphia for nine years, when he died. Judith outlived him four years. - - - - -

 Jack married May Newfield, and Daniel Nell Wicherly in San Francisco. Estelle, the pretty

daughter in Panama became the second wife of her cousin Josh Maduro. David married Susan Petit of New York. Two daughters, Eda and Rey remain unmarried. Their mother carefully secured their future by buying for them the married children's share of the Panama properties.



chie's widowed years were active and broad-minded. In contrast to the pious girl we showed in an early chapter refusing to accept the gift her mother bought for her on the Sabbath, she had developed into a woman who attended an interesting church service as often as a synagogue. In appearance she was always neat and well groomed. It was a principle with her to look crisp and fresh even in the early morning. She accomplished her housework energetically and serenely. Her daughters showed anxiety lest the housekeeping be too much for her strength, but she said, "You don't know what a satisfaction it is to be able to do it!" She did not work by the clock, but was liable to take a notion at any hour of the day or night to paint the floors or the furniture. But if she had anyone working for her, then she did watch the clock - to see that he did not remain one minute after hours.



f her two single daughters, Eda was in business, and Rey who had had her beautiful voice trained abroad, had returned and was giving singing lessons. She had aspired to the stage, but her mother was unalterably prejudiced against it. So

Rey had to give up all thought of a career. ~~~~~



Rachel's later years continued to be active and busy. Her step was as light as a girl's. When she was seventy-seven she joyously reported to Rey that a conductor had remarked to her as she tripped gaily from the street-car, "Madam, it's a pleasure to see how you get off that car - there's many a young one couldn't do it like that!" She hated dependence, and dreaded the idea of being a care to anyone. She often expressed the wish to die in her boots. ~~~~~



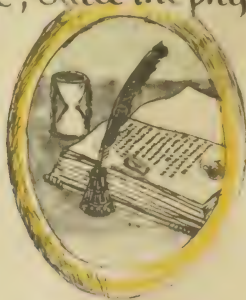
And so it happened. The day after her seventy-eighth birthday she started out for a walk and a little shopping.

"Don't be later than twelve-thirty," called Rey as she was leaving.

"I'll be home as usual, on the tick of the clock" replied her mother.

But she never came home. Instead, Rey was summoned by telephone to the hospital where the old lady had been taken. She had fallen from a sudden heart attack, in a department store. She died very soon.

"Old age", said the physician in charge.





And so we come to the end of our Manuscript, having told the tale of our Ancestor, Joshua Piza, his three wives and his eleven children. We have

investigated records, visited graveyards and written to far countries to get the data for our history; but above all we have made a nuisance of ourselves to the older members of our family visiting them, writing to them and in every way trying to stimulate their memories to recall the events of bygone days.



And why, you may ask, write about Joshua Piza and his Descendants? Were they so famous? Indeed they were not. But the lives of these very

human folk contain many quaint, interesting and amusing incidents worth recording. How many families have an ancestor that died of the shock of seeing negroes for the first time? What others can boast of a sixteen-year-old girl who married a man of forty-four, and besides bearing his nine children supported the family by her own hands?

But here is their story. As the long-suffering, neglected Husband of the Author sums it up:

This work, I hardly need explain,
Concerns the celebrated PIZAs
Who came to holland out of Spain
When Ferdinand provided visas.

APPENDIX

Jews in Curaçao.

Curaçao became a Dutch possession in the year 1634, and sixteen years later, twelve Jewish families arrived from Holland with letters from the Council to the Governor of the island, Matthias Beck, instructing him to give them land and outfit them as farmers. Agricultural pursuits had been sadly neglected by the essentially commercial Dutch and it was hoped that the newcomers, provided with negroes, horses, cattle and implements, might fill a very real want.

The names of the new settlers were:

De Meza, Aboab, Pereira, de Leon, La Parra, Touro Aboab, Cardoze, Jeserun, Marchena, Chavez, Oliviera and Henriquez Cutinho.

They were granted for residence a large tract of land two miles away from the fortress, Willemstad, and they were permitted to live nowhere else. It was a severely punishable offence for a Jew to be found within the fortress later than nine P.M.

Two years later these twelve families were augmented by others who came over from Holland in a company formed by Joseph Nunez da Fonseca. By a grant which allowed them a tract of land two leagues long on the coast for every fifty families, they were

provided with additional territory. But this company failed; for, naturally, Jews who had perfect freedom in Holland did not enjoy living in a newer, smaller country where restrictions were put upon them.

The numbers of the Curaçao settlement were soon augmented by the arrival of refugees from Brazil, which in 1654 was lost by Holland. These Brazilians were wealthy, and their money was so welcome to the Dutch that they were allowed to live anywhere they pleased, and soon they possessed the best houses on the best streets, and the richest lands. By the consent of the authorities, the original tract of land granted for dwellings and farms was appropriated as a burial ground, and enclosed by a thick brick wall. Among the earliest interments were: Ishack Henriquez Cotinho, 1670; Reverend Abraham Haum Lopez da Fonseca, 1673; Eluahio Hizkiahou Touro, 1673; Rachel Dovale, 1677; Esther de Ephraem Jesurun Henriquez, 1678; David Jesurun, 1691; N.Z.J. David Raphael Lopez da Fonseca, Hazan y Riby No Kahal Kadosh Mikve Israel en Curaçao, 1707.

After the consecration of the burial ground in 1656, the Jewish residents formed themselves into a religious body. They rented a small wooden house and met three times a day for service, electing a Drecentor, a Mohel and a Schochet. It was known as *De Hoop* (the Hope). There they worshipped until the close of the XVII Century when they purchased the site for a

proper synagogue on one of the principal streets. The corner stone was laid by the old Rabbi, Hazan David Raphael Lopez da Fonseca. Four stones for the extremities of the building were laid by Mordecai Alvarez Correa, Samuel de Casseres, Jacob Hiskiaho Moreo, and Manuel Hiskiaho Levy, with their names inscribed on the stones. Two stones for the door pillars by Daniel Aboab Cardoze and his wife Rebecca. It was named "Mikve Israel", Hope of Israel.

The synagogue was completed, and the first service was held on Passover, 1692. Then the congregation appealed to the Chief Hacham of Amsterdam to send them a competent leader, as the Reverend David Raphael Lopez da Fonseca was now an old man, unable to cope with his increased duties, and the problem of the rising generation. Heated religious discussion and dissention were rife among them. Rabbi Eliahu Lopez arrived highly recommended, and served until his death twenty years later. His wife predeceased him by thirteen years leaving no posterity.

In 1693 there was an exodus of ninety Jews from Curaçao, some for New Port, (including Ishack de Abraham Touro) and some, mostly of Italian descent, whom Curaçao had sheltered for nearly half a century since their arrival from Cayenne. These now moved on to Tucacas, Venezuela, where they founded a congregation. They did not forget the land that had sheltered them after their persecutions by the Portugese and the french, for in 1720 they sent a present of \$340.00 to purchase a Sepher Torah with its adornments for the Curaçao congregation.

Neither did the Shearith Israel Congregation of New York ignore the congregation from which some of its members had come: the same year it *asked aid* of them, in building its new synagogue.

For three years after Rabbi Lopez's death there was no minister, for Raphael Jesurun, the man selected to fill the position was away in Holland recovering his health when the death occurred. It was in the first year of his pastorship that the Hebrew Benevolent Society was organized, which existed for years, and took care of the poor of all sects. In 1731 the congregation had grown to such an extent that it was necessary to enlarge the synagogue. Permission to pull down and rebuild was granted by the Governor, Noah du Fay, upon payment of 800 patacas (Portuguese dollars). This governor was most friendly toward the Jews, and gave them posts of importance, never offered them by his predecessors. In 1739 the new synagogue was completed, the largest and finest in the West Indies. Its dimensions were 105 by 16 feet.

The following year a branch of the synagogue was started across the bay in the part of the island known as Otrá Banda; the people who lived there and wanted to go to service had to travel by boat, which was considered sinful on the Sabbath. In 1742 the cornerstone was laid, and in 1743 the new building was established, and called "Néveh Shalom, Dwelling of Peace. The name seems positively ironical, for from the very beginning there was nothing but bickering and rivalry

between the large and small synagogues. The Reverend Samuel Levy Maduro, assistant minister of the Mikve Israel was sent to Steveh Shalom to guide them. But the new congregation did not like to be subservient to Mikve Israel. They were not independent, they felt unimportant: they complained to the Governor and Council: "that on every possible occasion much wrong insult and contempt was shown them". On another occasion, in 1746, when the Governor's attention was called to their wrongs he ordered a reconciliation to take place on Day of Atonement.

In 1749 Rabbi Jesurun died, and Hacham Raphael Samuel Mendez de Sola, of Amsterdam, who could trace his antecedents back for seven hundred years, succeeded him. The congregation had grown greatly since the early days, and the Jews on the island numbered 2000. It was in the first year of Hacham de Sola's authority that trouble, worse than ever, broke out in the congregations. Besides the jealousy of Shalom for Mikve, there was internal strife in Mikve Israel congregation. There were thirty congregants who were not on speaking terms with the rest of them. They went so far as to build a wall in the burial ground so that their dead might not lie next to each other. When the quarrel reached this stage, the Governor of Curaçao reported to Holland the dangerous condition, and that paternal Prince, William Charles Henry Friso, of Orange Nassau interfered and issued an edict forbidding quarreling. (See page 4 a). The decree was obeyed to the letter, and

peace was at least temporarily restored. Mendez de Sola gave his famous peace sermon "Triunfo da Unido Contra o Pernicioso Vicio da Discordia", which was published in Amsterdam the following year. He lived to officiate ten years longer.

In 1761 Rabbi Isaac Henriquez Farro, a native of Amsterdam succeeded him; but he died within a year. For three years the pulpit was vacant, while they waited for Jacob Lopez da Fonseca, who was in Amsterdam preparing for the ministry to complete his studies. In 1765 he took charge of the congregation in which his ancestors had grown up. His pastorate was long and uneventful. On the fiftieth anniversary of his directorship, in 1815 a general holiday of thanksgiving was celebrated in honor of his Golden Jubilee. Alas, the affair proved too much for the old man: he was taken ill the next day, and though he did not die for two years, his usefulness was over.

The old Rabbi was succeeded by the Joshua Piza of our chronicle, who served only a few years. He in turn was followed by David Samias de Crasto.

References: "A Synopsis of the History of the Jews in Curacao" by the Reverend Joseph Corcos; records of Nederlandsch-Portugeesch-Israelitische Gemeente "Mikvé Israel" in Curaçao, N.W.I.

Piza.

We have been unable positively to trace the origin of the Piza family. While the name suggests the Italian city of Pisa, the family tradition is that they came from Spain or Portugal. Our theory is that on the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, they migrated to Portugal, where the refugees were tolerated for a few years longer. Many of the persecuted went to Italy. We surmise our family settled in Pisa until they moved on to Holland. It was there that the "s" in the name of the Italian city became a "z" - for we observe this substitution in the Dutch spelling of the name *Mozes*. We locate Joshua Piza's great-grandfather, Haim Piza, in Amsterdam at the end of the Seventeenth Century; but until his time, our endeavor to place the family is guess-work. Here we will mention chronologically all we can find in connection with the name of *Piza*.

In 1165, there resided in the city of Pisa twenty Jewish families.

In 1400, Jehiel da Pisa, son of Mattithiah da Pisa, founded a loan bank in Pisa. He was the representative sent by his congregation to the Congress of Bologna in 1415, and to Forli in 1418.

Jehiel, his grandson, was a friend of Don Isaac Abarvanel of Spain who, in 1450, asked his help for his oppressed brethren. But Jehiel, himself in danger

from the Dominicans, who in 1471 made an assault on his house, was unable to aid.

Isaac da Pisa, son of Jehiel, took care of fugitives from Spain and Portugal, and assisted them to find means of support.

Jehiel Nissim, nephew of Jehiel and son of Sam-
da Pisa, in 1523 sheltered David Reubeni.

Abraham ben Isaac da Pisa, famous Talmudist, son of Isaac ben Jehiel, in 1554 resided in Bologna, and died there. He was consulted as an authority on religious questions. He expressed the wish that there might be someone appointed as supreme authority to end bickering on religious matters.

In England we find that Charles II granted a commission to Abraham Israel da Pisa (also spelled *de Piso*, and sometimes described merely as *Abraham Israel*) and to Abraham Cohen to discover and work a gold mine in Jamaica on shares with the king. Failing to find it, he was banished from Jamaica, and was deprived of a gold chain previously given him by the king. He probably settled in Barbados, for in 1662 we find Isaac Israel de Piso and Aaron de Piso with two sisters and two brothers described as Jews of that island. Others of similar name appear in Barbados a little later: Eliahu de Pissa and Ishac Israel de Possa at St Michaels in 1680. Among witnesses to various wills in Barbados appear Emanuel de Piza in 1782 and Jacob Fonseca de Piza; Emanuel is described as a brother of Sarah Massia.

In Amsterdam in 1729 we find Jeudah Piza collaborating with Samuel Mendes de Solla in publishing a Spanish work. In 1740 he published the laws dealing with the Shehita in Portuguese. He brought out in 1769 a Pentateuch edition "Ezrat-ha-Sapher" which is well known for its accuracy. He also wrote for special occasions numerous poems in Hebrew. This linguistic author-publisher was our Joshua Piza's grandfather. We find from the records of the Portugeesch - Israelitische - Gemeente in Amsterdam that he married in 1723 Luna, the daughter of Semuel Ahubi.

Mozes Piza, the son of Jeudah and Luna in 1763 married Sara, the daughter of Joseph Palache. In 1793 Mozes compiled a song-book called "Shir Emunim"

References: The Jewish Encyclopedia; Publications of the Jewish Historical Society; records of the Portugeesch - Israelitische Gemeente te Amsterdam.

Rabbi Samuel Cohen de Piza, a native of Lisbon in the Seventeenth Century, is mentioned by E. H. Lindo as one of the most profound Talmudists of his age.

Lusitano de Samuel Piza was the author of a biblical comment in Hebrew published in Venice in 1640

Ahubi.

The name of Joshua Piza's grandmother was Luna Ahubi. We have not been able to find a record of any notable Ahubi, but in the Jewish Encyclopedia there is an entry about one Ben Meir Ahub (or Ibn Muhajar Ahub) who lived in the XII Century. He was a Spanish-Arabian poet. In some early sources he is spoken of as Oheb. This name was a very familiar one in the West Indies.

Palache.

Joshua Piza's mother was Sara, the daughter of Joseph Palache. It is possible that this family was descended from Samuel Palache, who was the Moroccan envoy sent by the King of Morocco to the Netherlands about 1591; he subsequently acted as consul there, and died at The Hague, 1616. He proposed to the magistrates of Middleburg in Zeeland to make that town an asylum for the Maranos, who would raise it to a considerable seaport; but the clergy of the town were opposed to the plan, and so it was not put into effect. Palache did much for the settlement of the Maranos in Amsterdam in 1593, and gained great favor with the Stadholder. Prince Maurice of Orange attended his funeral.

Jewish Encyclopedia.

Sacuto.

The surname of the two sisters that Joshua Piza married consecutively in 1810 and (about) 1815 was Sacuto. We find various spellings of the name: Sacuto, Sacutlo and Zacuto. In the records of the congregation in Amsterdam, the name of the first wife is given as Benvenida Sacuto, daughter of Isaac Sacuto and Judith Mendes Chumaceiro.

In Jewish history, and in one instance, in universal history, we find this name famous :

In Salamanca, Spain, before the days of the Inquisition, Abraham ben Samuel Zacuto was born in 1450. He was at different times professor of astronomy at Saragossa, Salamanca and Cartagena. After the exile of all Jews from Spain in 1492, he went to Portugal where he was appointed Court Astronomer and historiographer under John II and afterwards, under Dom Manoel. He was consulted by Manoel as to the practicability of Vasco da Gama's voyage, which he approved. Da Gama's ships were fitted with Zacuto's newly perfected astrolabe, the first to be made of iron instead of wood. In spite of his importance, Zacuto who was also known as Diogo Rodriguez, did not escape the fate of his persecuted brethren: he and his son Samuel were forced to flee. He, with Isaac ben Joseph Caro, are mentioned as being among seven or eight heroic

characters who strenuously opposed compulsory conversion in Portugal when 20,000 became (at least outwardly) Christians. After twice being taken prisoner, he finally arrived at Tunis. There he and Caro remained until Tunis was invaded by Spain, when they escaped to Turkey. Abraham Zacuto died there about 1510. Among his writings were:

1473. *Bi'ur Luhot*, a perpetual calender, published in Salamanca that was translated into Spanish & Latin.

1504. In Tunis. *Sefer ha Yuhasin*, a chronological study of the Jew from creation to 1500.

Various astronomical and astrological works.

References: Jewish Encyclopedia; Kayserlings "Biblioteca Española Portuguesa Judaica (Strasbourg 1890).

Abraham Zacuto, born in 1575, was the great-grandson of Abraham ben Samuel Zacuto, just described. A Marano, he was known as Lusitano Zacuto. He studied philosophy and medicine at the universities of Salamanca, Spain, and Coimbra, Portugal and was graduated a doctor of medicine before he was nineteen. He lived and practiced medicine in Lisbon for thirty years. Then, fearing the spreading menace of the Inquisition, he took refuge in Amsterdam. There he had himself circumcised, and at last lived openly as a Jew. He died on January 1, 1642. His ability in the practice of medicine, says Paquot, did him no less honor in Holland than in Portugal. He corresponded with various medical authorities in Portugal, Spain, Ger-

many and Holland. His book were "De Medicorum Principium Historia", "De Praxi Medica", and others.

Reference: Kayserling's "Biblioteca Española-Portuguesa Judaica".

Mozes ben Mordecai Zacuto, born 1625, probably in Amsterdam, was a fellow-student of Baruch Spinoza. He was a mystic and greatly interested in Cabala. At one time he fasted for forty days, hoping that as a result he might forget the Latin he had learned, which he did not feel could be reconciled to Cabalistic "truths." From Amsterdam he went to Poland. He was on his way to Palestine, when, passing through Venice, he was persuaded to remain there as Rabbi. He lived in Padua 1645-1673. In 1673, he went to Mantua at a salary of 300 ducats, and remained there until his death in 1691. But he had established a seminary for the study of Cabala in Mantua; compiled 47 Cabalistic liturgical poems; a *Shudda de Dayyani* (a guide for decisions on commercial law); *Kol ha-Re-Mez*, published posthumously, was his commentary on the *Mishna*, which he knew by heart. *Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Eliczer de Abraham Sacuto in 1767, published *Sermão Moral Sobre a Humildade na H. H. Talmud Torá*. He was in all probability a brother of Isaac Sacuto who fathered Joshua Pizas two wives. The men were contemporaries, and both are recorded as sons of Abraham.

References: Kayserling's "Biblioteca Española-Portuguesa Judaica";

Records of the Portugeesch Gemeente te Amsterdam.

Mendes Chumaceiro.

Joshua Piza's first wife Benvenida Sacutto (spelled as above in the Dutch records) and her sister Esther, his second wife, were the daughters of Ishac Sacutto and Judith Mendes Chumaceiro, whose marriage took place in Amsterdam in 1774.

Before that year, the records show an Abraham Mendes Chumaceiro who published his sermons in 1738 and 1740. He may have been the grandfather of the sisters Sacutto.

Since the time of these sisters there have been at least two Mendes Chumaceiros of some note:

Aaron Mendes Chumaceiro who was Haham in Amsterdam and later (after 1860) in Curaçao.

Jacob Mendes Chumaceiro, a son of this Aaron, who became Haham in Amsterdam in 1866.

Another son, Haim was Hazan in Curaçao and Rabbi in the United States.

References: Records of Amsterdam and Curaçao Congregations; corrections from J. L. Maduro.

Sasso.

We can find no record of any Sasso in Spanish or Portuguese annals; but we do come across the name *Suasso*, which occurs repeatedly. We believe the spelling became changed in the New World, so we quote what we find relating to the family *Suasso*.

Antonio (Isaac) Lopez *Suasso* was a resident of the Hague in 1676. For services King Charles II of Spain, he was created a baron. An ardent supporter of William of Orange, he advanced him 2,000,000 Gulden when he undertook his expedition to England in 1688. He asked for no receipt, saying, "If you are successful, you may repay me; if you are not successful, I will be a loser too."

Abraham Lopez *Suasso*, his son, married a daughter of Manuel de Teixeira, chargé d'affaires at Hamburg (1632-1654) for Queen Christina of Sweden.

Antonio (Isaac) *Suasso*, son of the above, married a daughter of Moses Mendes da Costa, governor of the Bank of England.

Alvaro Lopez *Sasso*, resident of London, was one of the wealthiest men of his time. In 1725 he was a member of the board of directors of the Spanish and Portuguese community in London. Seven years later, he received permission from the English

government to send settlers to the colony in Georgia. He himself migrated there in 1733.

Antonio Lopez Suasso, greatgrandson of the baron, was born in Amsterdam in 1776, and died in Mechlin. He assumed his mother's name, Dias de Fonseca and renounced Judaism.

St. Thomas.

At the time that Joshua Piza brought his family to St. Thomas in the early Eighteen-twenties, the island was a Danish possession, but the little isle with its wonderful land-locked harbor and its strategic position had passed through many hands since Columbus discovered it.

The Dutch colonized it in 1657 and it remained theirs for ten years when it fell to the English, who retained it for only four years. Then in 1671, the Danish West India Company took it over and kept it until 1685, when it became the property of the Brandenburg Company, mainly Dutch in ownership. During the wars of the Eighteenth Century, St. Thomas was a Free Port and very important to commerce. In 1754 the King of Denmark took it, and it flourished. Once more the British captured it in 1801, but held it only a short while. However from 1807 to 1815 they were again in possession and its harbors were crowded with British ships awaiting convoy. Then the Danes again came in and St. Thomas remained theirs until 1917 when the United States purchased it for Twenty-five Million Dollars.

After the sacking of St. Eustatius by Rodney in 1781, the Jews from that nearby island arrived in St. Thomas. They were her first Jewish settlers and by 1795 they

had established a flourishing community and began keeping their records in an orderly manner - First birth: 1796 - First burial: 1798. By 1800, they had constructed their first synagogue, and names like Sasso, Robles, Delvalle, Moron and Fidanque appear in the archives. Other Jews joined the group from different parts of Europe, including France.

The first temple was but four years old when it was destroyed by fire but the sacred Torahs were saved and are still used today. A second synagogue, built in 1806 was soon deemed too small, and in 1833 a third, designed by architects brought from France was erected in Neo-classic style and is in use today.

In 1850, King Christian VIII sanctioned a code of laws for governing the congregation, which between 1830 and 1850 reached its peak. There were over a thousand Jews on an island whose total population was only slightly above two thousand. But after that, their trade began to slacken. The invention of the telegraph and other had detrimental effects on St Thomas, and many members departed. Camille Pissarro, the artist, left for his ancestral France; some went to other West Indian Islands. David Levi went early to Florida, where he was later elected to the U.S. Senate. Judah P. Benjamin, also settled in the South where, during the Civil War he was known as "the brains of the Confederacy".

Now there are not many Jews left on the island - only 18 or 20 families. The present Governor (1951) is one of them Morris de Castro.

Refs: Encyclopedia Britannica; Jewish Encyc.; Jew ish Hist.; See. Pub's; article in Jewish Layman Oct. 1949 by Marshall Frankel.

Lopez da Fonseca.

Since they are not forebears of Joshua Piza or of his wives, we have really no reason for including notes about the Lopez da Fonseca family in this work. But we have so often encountered references to this old Portuguese name, variously known as *Lopez da Fonseca*, *Lopez de Fonseca*, *Lopez Fonseca* and frequently just *Lopez*, that we imagine it will be a matter of family interest. There is a tradition that all the *Eliases* and *Esthers* were to call themselves simply *Lopez* after a distinguished pair of (maternal?) ancestors of that name. At any rate, we know that there was an *Elihu Lopez* who after being *haham* at Amsterdam, went in 1675 to Barbados to lead the Jewish community there; and later, in 1690 served in Curaçoa. There are also *Fonsecas* galore, but we do not know that we have any claim to them; one of the very first names found in the annals of the Netherlands West Indies is that of *Jacob Nunes da Fonseca*, also known as *David Nassi*, a merchant of Curaçao, who obtained a grant of land in 1652 from the Dutch West India Company to found a Jewish colony on the island.

In Lima, Peru, in 1639, there lived a wealthy Marano merchant, *Diego Lopez da Fonseca*. It was said that he sold goods at half price to anyone who, on entering his shop, trod on a certain stone of the

threshold of which he had buried a crucifix. He was burned to death for judaizing.

In 1690, *Hazan David Raphael Lopez da Fonseca* laid the cornerstone of the Mikve Israel congregation in Curaçao. He was their first minister and died in 1707.

The death of his brother, *Reverend Abraham Haim Lopez da Fonseca* is recorded on a tombstone of 1723.

In Bayonne, France *Yshac Hushiah Lopez de Fonseca* is mentioned as a friend of David Meldola. Meldola lived 1685-1748.

From 1765-1817, *Jacob Lopez da Fonseca*, who studied in Amsterdam, officiated as Rabbi to the Mikve Israel congregation. The day after his Golden Jubilee he fell ill, and he died two years later.

Moses Lopez da Fonseca, from Curaçao, was one of the early Rabbis of the Shearith Israel congregation in New York. He served there from 1728 to 1736. His annual salary was "£50, wood and matzoths."

Esther Lopez, the sister of Rebecca and Leah, the two Lopez FONSECAS who married the brothers Moses and Judah Piza was known in St Thomas as *Ashee* and was a notably pious woman. So holy was she considered, that during a season of terrifying earthquakes, her neighbors for three weeks kept her praying for safety, without surcease. On the occasion, Rabbi Chumaceiro wrote out for her a cabalistic talisman, still in the family.







